
Bringing a little chaos into your life.
Dragon®
MAGAZINE
NEW! AD&D™ TRADING CARDS—free in this issue
$3.50 USA
#180

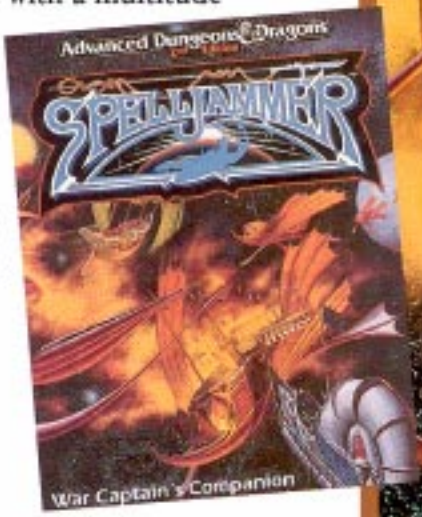
SPELLJAMMER™

CAMPAIGN SETTING

Stand Firm, Captain!

The **War Captain's Companion** is the newest accessory for the SPELLJAMMER™ campaign. This boxed set contains a wealth of information that DMs and players will find invaluable. It includes:

- A 96-page booklet with rules to create your own spelljamming craft
- A 64-page booklet detailing every known ship in wildspace and beyond — over 125 vessels
- The *Combat Among the Stars* booklet, with rules for fleet actions
- A poster with a multitude of ships
- Over 30 3-D fold-up ships, and two starfield maps





ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc. SPELLJAMMER and the TSR logo are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. © 1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

New challenges await you at Waldenbooks!

Get ready for adventure at Waldenbooks where you'll find a full line of products for TSR's popular role-playing games, from boxed sets and gaming modules to accessories, novels and more.

Preferred Readers® Save Every Day

Don't forget, Gamers: As a Waldenbooks Preferred Reader you'll save 10% every day on your favorite TSR products and earn valuable purchase points toward $5.00 certificates you can use on your next purchase. Ask how you can join and start saving today!



Available in May at Waldenbooks.
Or call to order:
1-800-322-2000, Dept. 507



DARK SUN™ **World: Dragon Kings**
Create ultra high-level characters with this exciting rules supplement. Expand to the 30th level and battle for control of the world! (Hardcover)
Item #2581 · $20.00



ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® **Priest Spell Cards**
These easy-to-use cards list individual spells with everything you need to know to create a spell book for your priest character. Over 400 cards!
Item #2584 · $18.95

Waldenbooks®

Check the Yellow Pages for the Waldenbooks nearest you.

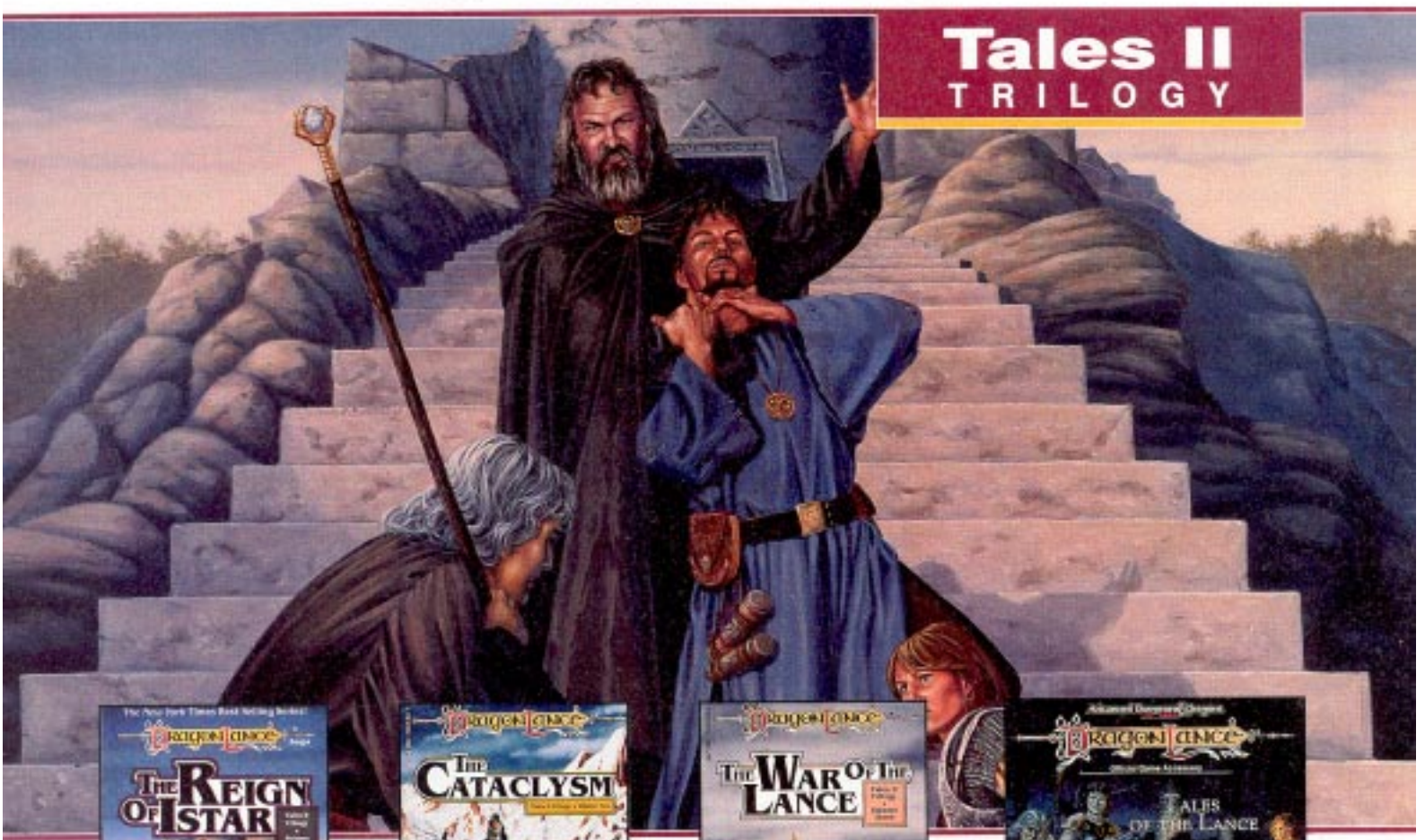
Waldenbooks welcomes the American Express cards.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc.
DARK SUN and the TSR logo are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.

DRAGONLANCE® SAGA

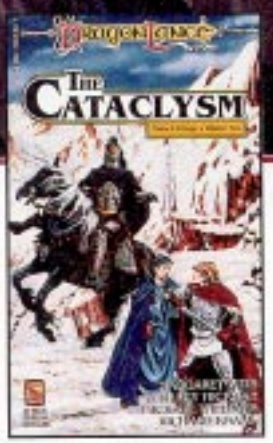
The Original DRAGONLANCE® Saga Authors are Back!

Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman, Nancy Varian Berberick, Richard A. Knaak, Roger E. Moore, Douglas Niles, Nick O'Donohoe, Dan Parkinson, and Michael Williams are reunited in this trilogy of new short stories about the heroes of Krynn. Rediscover the magic in *The Reign of Istar*, the first book in the new Tales II Trilogy.





The Reign of Istar
Now Available



Don't Miss
The Cataclysm
Available in July



The War of the Lance
Available in November



And Here's the Game for Everyone Who Loves the Books

Tales of the Lance

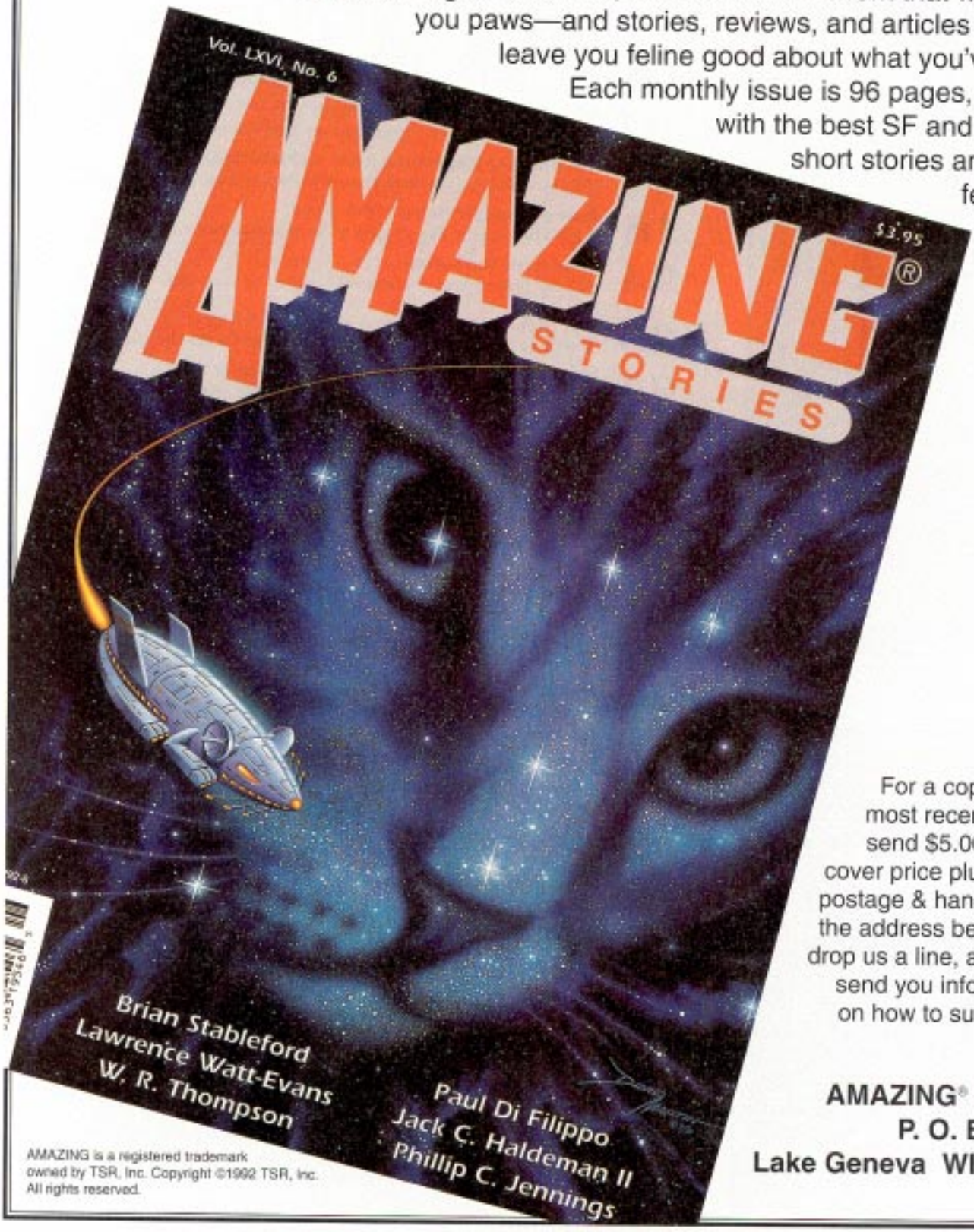
is the perfect introductory game to the exciting DRAGONLANCE saga and the world of Krynn! Look for it in game, hobby, and book stores everywhere in July.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and DRAGONLANCE are registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. The TSR logo is a trademark owned by TSR, Inc.

©1992 TSR, Inc.
All Rights Reserved.

CAT-A-CLYSMIC!

There's nothing mousy about the new AMAZING® Stories: a full-size magazine format, with full-color artwork that will make you paws—and stories, reviews, and articles that will leave you feline good about what you've read. Each monthly issue is 96 pages, packed with the best SF and fantasy short stories and other features.



For a copy of the most recent issue, send $5.00 ($3.95 cover price plus $1.05 postage & handling) to the address below—or drop us a line, and we'll send you information on how to subscribe.

AMAZING® Stories
P. O. Box 111
Lake Geneva WI 53147

AMAZING is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc. Copyright ©1992 TSR, Inc. All rights reserved.

Dragon MAGAZINE

Issue # 180
Vol. XVI, No. 11
April 1992

Publisher
James M. Ward

Editor
Roger E. Moore

Fiction editor
Barbara G. Young

Associate editor
Dale A. Donovan

Editorial assistant
Wolfgang H. Baur

Art director
Larry W. Smith

Production staff
Gaye O'Keefe Angelika Lokotz
Tracey Zamagne Mary Chudada

Subscriptions
Janet L. Winters

U.S. advertising
Roseann Schnering

U.K. correspondent and U.K. advertising
Bronwen Livermore



CONTENTS

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS

Insert AD&D™ Trading Cards— TSR staff
Your preview of the 1992 series is here in this issue!

OTHER FEATURES

9 **Not Quite the Frontispiece** — Ken Widing
Our April Fool's section wandered off. Just enjoy.

10 **Suspend Your Disbelief!** — Tanith Tyrr
Maybe it's fantasy, but your campaign must still make sense!

14 **Not *Another* Magical Sword!?!** — Charles Rodgers
Why own just any old magical sword when you can own a legend?

18 **Role-playing Reviews** — Rick Swan
A good day for the thought police: three supplements on psionics.

24 **Your Basic Barbarian** — Lee A. Spain
So your fighter has a 6 intelligence. Make the most of it.

28 **Hot Night in the Old Town** — Joseph R. Ravitts
If your cleric thinks his home life is dull, wait till the DM sees *this!*

34 **Colorful Connection** — Raymond C. Young
What's the puzzle within this puzzle? A fantasy crossword for gamers.

41 **The Voyage of the *Princess Ark*** — Bruce A. Heard
What happens when a D&D® game character dies?

52 **Your Own Treasure Hunt** — Robin Rist
When funds run low in your gaming club, it's time for a fund-raising adventure.

57 **The Role of Computers** — Hartley, Patricia, and Kirk Lesser
A visit with Dr. Brain, Elvira, and the Simpsons.

66 **Novel Ideas** — Will Larson and Pat McGilligan
Two new trilogies are launched from the two popular settings.

68 **The Power of the Pen** — The editors
Tell us what you think, and win big! A readers' survey—with prizes.

70 **The Dragon's Bestiary** — Spike Y. Jones
A goat that knocks down walls, and a lizard that knocks down *everything*.

82 **Murder Most Fowl** — fiction by Deborah Millitello
The goose that laid the golden eggs is dead—and almost everyone has a motive to kill it.

95 **Wear Your Best Suit!** — Justin Mohareb
The best defense is a battlesuit in the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game.

98 **The Wanderers** — Jerold M. Stratton
Wouldn't it be nice to have logical random-roll encounter tables?

112 **Through the Looking Glass** — Robert Bigelow
Is it real, or is it one of Saddam's decoys? Notes on Desert Storm gaming.

DEPARTMENTS

5 Letters
6 Editorial
37 Forum
63 Convention Calendar
77 Sage Advice
92 TSR Previews
102 Dragonmirth
104 Twilight Empire
108 Gamers Guide

COVER

There's nothing like getting the gang together with a dragon and some stolen treasure to make a dwarf's day perfect. Our cover artist, Dan Frazier, reveals a cheerful romp in a dungeon corridor over the ownership of some loot.

LETTERS

What did you think of this issue? Do you have a question about an article or have an idea for a new feature you'd like to see? In the United States and Canada, write to: Letters, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Letters, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom.

Unanswerables

The following are short excerpts from letters that were actually received by the editors of DRAGON Magazine. Except for minor editing, they appear as they were written.

Dear Dragon,

Why isn't there a table or something for falling in love? I mean, if you look through the *Monster Manuals*, you find some rather cute beasties such as the dryad, sprite, alu demon, Glasya, and nereids. But, of course, there's those girls in the group who have 18 comeliness. But my DM just doesn't look like the kind of guy who would put something like that in our group. You see, there's this girl elf in our group who really makes me weak in the knees. Oh, well, just send me a table if there is one, though I seriously doubt it.

P.S. If there is a table, could you rig it so that female elves fall in love with 9th-level assassins?

This paper was sent to you for good luck. The original is in New England. The luck has been sent to you. You will receive good luck within four days of receiving this letter, provided in turn you send it on. This is no joke. You will receive good luck in the mail. An R.A.F. officer received $470,000.00. Joe Elliot received $40,000.00 and lost it because he broke the chain.

I am sending you a copy of my 215th-level magic-user/fighter, Sharmal. Will you send me a remodified copy of him telling me what is legal and illegal about the character?

One of my PCs fell in love with an NPC who is a silver dragon. He accepts her for what she is. They have been married for some time now and want to know if it is possible to have a child.

Have you ever taken a shower with a person who has been mauled by a tiger? I have.

My friend and I have an idea for a submission to your magazine concerning cross-breeding of races (e.g., half-troll, half-umber hulk, etc.) and we would sure like a copy of your writer's guidelines

I have a problem. The only campaign in my area cheats like hell. They make up stupid rules (such as sex drive), and they don't use most of the real rules (such as THAC0, saving throws, and experience points). Their characters get to the 40th level in one week. The DM says ability scores of STR 25, DEX 23, CON 18, INT 23, WIS 18, CHAR 16 are weak. It drives me crazy. Since there's no other campaigns in my area, what should I do?

. . . Please make twenty copies of this letter and see what happens in four days. The chain comes from South Venezuela and was written by a missionary from South America. Since the copy must make a tour of the world, you must make twenty copies and send them to your friends and associates. After a few days, you will get a surprise. . . .

My character's name is "Brogg." He is a 475th-level fighter with 2,078 hp. Brogg is immune to everything except a +3 club. And I would like you to send me some new monsters that you think could defeat him! He has killed almost all of the arch-devils, dragons, etc. He has killed everything in the *Monster Manual I* and *II*, and the FIEND FOLIO® tome.

My question is, what characteristics do I get with dwarf/human offspring? (Dwarven females are in short supply.) What are the differences between half-brother PCs with the same half-elf father but with a human mother and an elf mother? What do I do if my crazy chaotic dwarven baron succeeds in his siege of the elven dowager viscountess's castle? My worst-case scenario is a character whose grandparents include a half-elf, a stout halfling, a half-orc, and a dwarf. Any help on these genetic problems would be appreciated.

Is it possible for you to send me a complete list of the prices of slaves you can buy?

A friend of mine wrote to you and asked you if he could have a half-cat character (like in *Thundercats).* And I was wondering if you said that he could have them in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® role-playing game? I was also wondering if he could also use all the weapons from *Thundercats—e.g.*, +5 claw shield or a sword of omens? Because he said that you said he could.

If a werewolf had sex with a human woman, is there a chance she would contract lycanthropy?

Keep getting those great cover paintings. (Larry Elmore would be welcome to tattoo my back!)

When you've got a three-spelljammer garage, keep gold dragons as pets, and rule a kingdom when you're not moonlighting as an assassin of gods, it's easy to forget that you started out with a broad, or maybe a long sword, and some chain mail, and a dungeon.

My house was minor damaged by Tiamat and when I almost killed her she alway go back to the 9 plains of hell. This happens about 3 times every 6 months in D&D terms. I want to put a stop to her coming and destroying my house, friends, and most importantly my hit points.

Can you tell me how.

Continued on page 120

DRAGON® Magazine (ISSN 0279-6848) is published monthly by TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756 (201 Sheridan Springs Road), Lake Geneva WI 53147, United States of America. The postal address for all materials from the United States of America and Canada except subscription orders is: DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, (201 Sheridan Springs Road), Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.; telephone (414) 248-3625. fax (414) 248-0389. The postal address for all materials from Europe is DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom; telephone: (0223) 212517 (U.K.), 44-223-212517 (international); telex: 818761: fax (0223) 248066 (U.K.), 44-223-248066 (international).

Distribution: DRAGON Magazine is available from game and hobby shops throughout the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and through a limited number of other overseas outlets. Distribution to the book trade in the United States is by Random House, Inc., and in Canada by Random House of Canada, Ltd. Distribution to the book trade in the United Kingdom is by TSR Ltd. Send orders to: Random House, Inc., Order Entry Department, Westminster MD 21157, U.S.A.; telephone: (800) 733-3000. Newsstand distribution throughout the United Kingdom is by Comag Magazine Marketing, Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7QE. United Kingdom, telephone: 0895-444055.

Subscriptions: Subscription rates via second-class mail are as follows: $30 in U.S. funds for 12 issues sent to an address in the U.S. or Canada: £21 for 12 issues sent to an address within the United Kingdom; £30 for 12 issues sent to an address in Europe, $50 in U.S. funds for 12 issues sent by surface mail to any other address, or $90 in U.S. funds for 12 issues sent air mail to any other address. Payment in full must accompany all orders; include checks or money orders made payable to TSR, Inc., or charges to valid MasterCard or VISA credit cards; send subscription orders with payments to: TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 5695, Boston MA 02206, U.S.A. In the United Kingdom, methods of payment include cheques or money orders made payable to TSR Ltd., or charges to a valid ACCESS or VISA credit card; send subscription orders with payments to TSR Ltd., as per that address above. Prices are subject to change without prior notice. The issue of expiration of each subscription is printed on the mailing label of each subscriber's copy of the magazine. Changes of address for the delivery of subscription copies must be received at least six weeks prior to the effective date of the change in order to assure uninterrupted delivery.

Back issues: A limited quantity of back issues is available from either the TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop (P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.) or from TSR Ltd. For a free copy of the current catalog that lists available back issues, write to either of the above addresses.

Submissions: All material published in DRAGON Magazine becomes the exclusive property of the publisher, unless special arrangements to the contrary are made prior to publication. DRAGON Magazine welcomes unsolicited submissions of written material and artwork; however, no responsibility for such submissions can be assumed by the publisher in any event. Any submission accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope of sufficient size will be returned if it cannot be published. We strongly recommend that prospective authors write for our writers' guidelines before sending an article to us. In the United States and Canada, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope (9½" long preferred) to: Writers' Guidelines, c/o DRAGON Magazine, as per the above address; include sufficient American postage or International Reply Coupons with the return envelope. In Europe, write to: Writers' Guidelines, c/o DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd; include sufficient return postage or IRCs with your SASE.

Advertising: For information on placing advertisements in DRAGON Magazine, ask for our rate card. All ads are subject to approval by TSR, Inc. TSR reserves the right to reject any ad or any reason. In the United States and Canada, contact: Advertising Coordinator, TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, contact: Advertising Coordinators, TSR Ltd.

Advertisers and/or agencies of advertisers agree to hold TSR, Inc. harmless from and against any loss or expense from any alleged wrongdoing that may arise out of the publication of such advertisements. TSR, Inc. has the right to reject or cancel any advertising contract for which the advertiser and/or agency of advertiser fails to comply with the business ethics set forth in such contract.

DRAGON is a registered trademark of TSR, Inc. Registration applied for in the United Kingdom. All rights to the contents of this publication are reserved, and nothing may be reproduced from it in whole or in part without first obtaining permission in writing from the publisher. Material published in DRAGON® Magazine does not necessarily reflect the opinions of TSR, Inc. Therefore, TSR will not be held accountable for opinions or mis-information contained in such material

® designates registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. ™ designates trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. Most other product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Second-class postage paid at Lake Geneva, Wis., U.S.A., and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to DRAGON Magazine, TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. USPS 318-790, ISSN 0279-6848.

EDITORIAL



Artwork by Michael Ferman

The centaur of attention

Once upon a time, there was a happy gnome thief with light fingers, a magical dragonfly, and a human girlfriend. He had it all, as far as he was concerned, but later events proved that it wasn't enough. One day he got himself killed out in the wilderness when no clerics were about except for one old druid who muttered some phrases, waved his hands, and had the gnome *reincarnated*. Then there was no gnome at all; instead, there was a groggy eagle wearing gnome clothes.

It took time for the ex-gnome to get used to his new form. He lost his girlfriend and thief skills, of course, and he gave away his magical dragonfly, but after a while he began to *like* being an eagle. It wasn't bad at all to soar thousands of feet over the party, to see encounters miles away, to dive on orcs with claws outstretched and to fly so fast that arrows could barely catch him. So eagle he stayed, for many exciting adventures. The moral of this story is: Hey, why not?

The eagle was one of my characters in an AD&D® game played long ago. About half the AD&D game groups I've been with have featured at least one oddball player character that you'd never have imagined would be allowed in the game. As long as the character isn't some sort of godling, things often work out just fine (even extreme circumstances can be tolerated for an adventure or two). Some groups have more trouble with cavaliers from the AD&D 1st Edition game than they have with centaur archers, dryad wizards, or aquatic-elf clerics.

Every role-playing game has different standards for what it accepts as legitimate character types. As has been discovered by many gamers around the world, however, such rules are usually flexible enough to allow for even weirder characters than the designers imagined. Some games, like TSR's GAMMA WORLD® system, allow for incredibly bizarre characters including robots and mutant animals and plants, many of which are perfectly playable even if they aren't human at all. (An insectoid thri-kreen from the AD&D DARK SUN™ campaign and an amoeboid Dralasite from TSR's STAR FRONTIERS® game are completely nonhuman but useable within their respective rules.) Face it: In terms of game mechanics, you can make a toaster with arms and legs just as effective a character as anything else.

A few general game-mechanics limits are usually observed in order for a novel character in any role-playing game system to become a playable one—but, as shall be noted, even these "laws" may be violated, at least for a short period of time.

Intelligence: All characters in any role-playing game, even barbarians (and even toaster characters in Steve Jackson Games' TOON* game, as noted in the editorial in issue #178), are assumed to have at least enough intelligence to plan out what they want to do in their next game turn. Of all the basic necessities for oddball characters, this one is the least likely to be discarded (though I'm sure some people who play barbarians and toasters will take issue with me). If a character is too dumb to think, it's too dumb to be played.

Communication: The character should ideally be able to communicate with the rest of the adventuring group, meaning that the player can simply talk with the other gamers and the game master to make his character's words and deeds clear. However, many game systems hamper communication between characters because of language difficulties. Mute, deaf, or blind characters might also have trouble making themselves understood, and if they cannot read or write, either, then they are in a fix. If a player has a character who relies on pantomime or sign language, the GM might require the player to perform the same actions as his character in order to see if anyone else understands what the character is saying (this could turn into an amusing party game even under the pressure of a dangerous encounter—perhaps especially then!).

Optionally, the character might not want to communicate with the rest of the group. If the character is silently and invisibly following the other adventurers, he would need only to communicate with the GM to make his actions known. Though the other players know that the "missing" character's player is present (unless that part is a secret, too, with the player being secluded in another room or even in another home, communicating with the GM by phone during breaks in the main action), their characters won't have the faintest clue unless the hidden character has a dose of bad luck. In most games, this situation might occur if the hidden character is a thief, a spy, or a secret benefactor who helps the heroes without their knowledge. Perhaps he is forbidden to speak with the other characters thanks to some sort of spell or religious belief. Perhaps, however, the character is by nature unable to communicate effectively, being transformed into a pack mule, a bird, or the like. (The eagle in the introduction was able to use telepathy, so it didn't count.) Perhaps it even started the game as an animal or other being that could not speak.

In the long run, a character who cannot communicate with other characters is not much fun to play. On short-term missions this isn't as much of a problem, and if cleverly run it adds much spice to the goings-on. I wouldn't recommend more than one PC being incommunicado during an adventure, as the adventure then becomes nothing more than an endless string of notes being passed to the GM

with no one knowing what's going on.

Manipulative ability: The character should be able to use tools, weapons, or magical powers that allow it to alter its environment. This broad statement includes things like beating up monsters, picking up treasure, fixing armor, catching food, writing letters, drawing maps, etc. However, you might have situations in which a character is unable to use his hands (being restrained or injured) or has no hands at all (being a nonhuman animal or robot). Even a tentacle can be a blessing if it can flip off a light switch or carry a dagger or gun; my eagle could use his claws and beak to pick up and carry things.

Playing a character with limited or no manipulative ability is a real challenge. A paladin in a long-ago AD&D game was transformed into a giant cockroach for smart-mouthing a deity; it was quite amusing to see how he got around for the next two weeks of game time, being unable to open doors, carry weapons, etc. A character with no way to handle things might still prove useful as a scout or advisor. Consider an SF-game character who is a computer, unable to move about but able to speak with the other heroes through radios and able to see what's going on by watching television pictures sent by small cameras carried by the heroes or mounted on the group's car. Game editor Anne Brown recalls an adventure using Chaosium's CALL OF CTHULHU* game in which her brother-in-law's investigator literally lost his body. The hero became an insubstantial, invisible presence that was unable to pick up any object or even communicate with other group members unless he was allowed to temporarily possess an investigator. However, he made a dandy spy, being able to pass through solid objects and report back later about traps and monsters lurking ahead of the group.

Movement: The character should be able to move about in the game world with the other characters, sensing what they do and able to go where they go. However, there are exceptions like the computer in the SF game mentioned previously, or a sentient plant or crystalline life form. An intelligent sword in a fantasy game could move about only if someone carried him (unless it was capable of "dancing" —fighting an opponent on its own—or could control a flesh golem or unintelligent monster). In one game in which I took part, one character was a cleric who was *cursed* to remain only 6" tall; he had his own special carrying case when the group had to move along at a rapid rate.

Compatible power: One player in an early game I refereed had a demigod character who constantly caused problems for other player characters. Had I used any smarts in the matter, I would have simply banned his character from play in my games, but I was a novice and didn't do it, so several potentially good games managed to get out of hand.

By compatible power, I mean that no one character can control the actions of other characters or handle the majority of all conflicts and problems the group faces as a whole. If someone is so powerful as to make the rest of the group redundant on an adventure, that character is too powerful. Anyone should be able to run a character significantly weaker than most others if he wants, however, as this could provide interesting role-playing opportunities. How well would a 1st-level halfling thief cope with an AD&D adventure in which everyone else is 20th level? Maybe the thief has some use after all ("Hey, let me open the door, okay? I can check for traps!"). Maybe the weakest character has something that gives him more power, or has a mission that no one else can accomplish (what did Bilbo and Frodo Baggins do, after all?).

If the player is trustworthy, other group members might let him play a very powerful character if his actions are constrained so as to make other characters important. Gandalf traveled with some dwarves and a hobbit, I recall, and everyone was important to the adventure at Lonely Mountain in some way. Perhaps the most powerful character in a group might be a female golden dragon who has secretly assumed human shape to rescue her children from a dungeon, but she cannot assume dragon shape in narrow corridors; she might look for competent fighters and thieves to assist her, but she'll otherwise act like a wizard. Perhaps the toughest character is a *cursed* monster (a ki-rin or a deva, may be) or a high-level cleric forced to do penitence and limit his abilities. In any event, he can't finish the adventure on his own—he needs some helping hands.

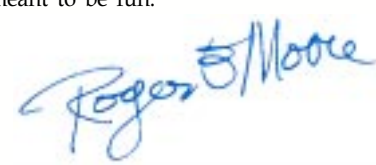
Cohesiveness: The ability of a character to work on group goals with low friction is very important. In a long-term campaign, this quality ranks second in importance for a playable character only to intelligence. Granted, amusing adventures can be had with set-ups like West End Games' PARANOIA* system, in which everyone is a traitor out to sell out everyone else for personal gain, and this idea works well for most short-playing adventures. But if the players genuinely don't trust each other in a serious setting, the gaming group will fall apart and is very unlikely to be resurrected.

Rewards: In almost every game system, characters have the chance to gain some sort of reward for their deeds, be it experience points, karma points, higher ability and skill scores, better combat and defensive abilities, more hit points, more spells, or whatever. Even if the character cannot gain bonuses to his personal statistics, he can gain money, treasure, property, personal favors, wishes, and fame, and the player gains the enjoyment of outwitting the GM. My eagle took the treasure route as he could use certain magical items, and he could always use favors from other group members or from the people they rescued. I also used to play a high-level half-ogre fighter who no longer cared about collecting either experience or treasure, simply enjoying the thrill of pitting himself against terrible foes (I've played a silver dragon and several neutral ogres for the same reason).

Given these seven characteristics and the knowledge that you can fudge with several of them and still get an enjoyable and playable character, you can come up with some very interesting roles for your next gaming session. If someone has a paladin, would someone else like to role-play his talking war horse or Pegasus? If someone has a wizard, would someone else like to play her brownie or pseudo-dragon familiar? The CREATURE CRUCIBLE™ accessories for the D&D® game each offer a wide assortment of unusual character races, and past articles in DRAGON® Magazine have given such variant AD&D game races as half-ogres (issue #22), winged folk (#51), centaurs (#103 and #105), half-dryads and half-satyrs (#109), aquatic elves (#116), aarakocra (#124), and humanoids (#141). The RPGA™ Network has had AD&D tournaments in which all of the characters were lycanthropes, animals, monsters, plants, or undead revenants (they died in the first round and were brought to unlife in the second to complete their mission). In one adventure, only one character was human and the rest were his sentient magical items.

If you're looking for more ideas on bizarre characters, check out other role-playing games and see what they offer. Some recent horror games allow the characters to become vampires, but even a vampire is pretty normal compared to certain SF aliens such as the Hiver from GDW's MEGATRAVELLER* game. I once tried to talk a GM into letting a friend and me role-play a two-headed giant, with each of us running half the giant; maybe you'll have better luck than I did.

The next time you're in the mood to experiment and bend a few role-playing rules just to see what happens, give this a try. You may have to spend a little time figuring out just what a sentient holy sword or think tank can do to make itself useful as a character, but the time might well be worth the effort. After all, role-playing is only a game, and games are meant to be fun.



* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

ENJOY THE CONVENIENCE OF HOME DELIVERY!



Fill out and mail the subscription card in this issue.

If the card is missing, write to:

Subscriptions:
DRAGON® Magazine
P.O. Box 111
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

TSR Ltd. Subscriptions
120 Church End
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge CBI 3LB
United Kingdom

Dragon®
MAGAZINE

DRAGON is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1990 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Artwork by Ken Widing

Make your AD&D® adventures logical as well as fun



Suspend Your Disbelief!

by Tanith Tyrr

Artwork by Joseph Pillsbury

Too many Dungeon Masters construct their AD&D® adventures arbitrarily, creating cities, monsters, and characters without rhyme or reason. Cities spring up out of thin air, built by the whims of the DM and populated with inhabitants who apparently eat leaves and dirt as no arable farmland is in sight. The citizens spend all their time hanging out in taverns and offering the party gold and magical treasures to defeat evil monsters who romp around in empty dungeons, apparently eating cave moss and stray adventurers since dungeons can't support balanced ecological systems. The dungeons, of course, consist of numerous underground rooms connected by twisting tunnels, all built by little elves or dwarves or whatever solely to harbor monsters and store treasure for adventurers to discover.

If this sounds painfully familiar, then you or your DM is missing something that would be called a plot if we were dealing with a literary adventure instead of one for a role-playing game. Plots are what give motivation to the player characters and, ultimately, give continued life to a campaign.

Do you believe in magic?

One of the most important elements of a plot, albeit an unseen and subtle one, is called suspension of disbelief. It allows a reader or player to pick up a story line and accept the existence of things not known to exist, like ghosts, fairies, magic, starships, or aliens. Suspension of disbelief allows this to happen without spoiling the reader's or player's enjoyment by making him stop and think, "Hey, that isn't real. *Fireball* spells don't exist." Logical consistency in your adventures enables your players to enjoy this suspension of disbelief and empathize with the ghost, alien, or fairy character that has no actual existence except in the author's imagination.

Logical consistency means you don't violate the rules that you have set for your universe. If you have established that magic works, it ought to work in a reasonable and consistent manner. I can say: "Okay, magical spells exist in this reality. What I cannot do is allow them to be thrown around in a careless fashion. Only certain people—mages—can cast these spells after years of hard work and sacrifice, and they must perform certain specific gestures and rituals to cast them. Such spells take energy, and some of them cause a reaction in the body of the mage." I have now established a reasonable set of rules for the use of magic, a sort of pseudo-physics, and as long as I do not violate them, my players can enjoy suspension of disbelief.

A fantasy role-playing game usually provides a reasonably coherent system of magic-use. Sticking to that system in a consistent manner and making the events in your fantasy world fit those rules of magic will go a long way to making your campaign a believable one. If an event violates the magic system (for example, an enemy mage goes *invisible* with a snap of his fingers instead of chanting the usual words and making spell-casting gestures), there should be a good reason for it (perhaps the enemy mage has developed a powerful *invisibility* spell).

Three-dimensional monsters

An area where suspension of disbelief is necessary but seldom invoked is in the creation of "monsters!" I can easily accept that there are magical creatures if I have accepted the existence of magic. What I cannot accept is that they apparently run around in underpopulated dungeons and wildernesses with nothing to eat but the occasional adventurer. The excuse that they're magical, so they don't need to eat, drink, or go to the bathroom, just doesn't make it.

If your monsters are intelligent, each monster race should have a culture with specific codes of appearance and social behavior, and probably a religion or creation myth that justifies its social structure or lack thereof. If the monsters are not intelligent, they had better fit into a balanced ecology with a specific prey or plant population to support them; encounter tables should reflect this. It takes a large, steadily breeding population of prey animals to support one predator, and in any given area, it is a lot more likely that a party will meet a deer or other prey animal than a giant lizard or other predator.

How did your monster evolve? Is it a natural beast that simply occupies a convenient environmental niche, or is it a magical monster whose race was originally created by an insane sorcerer's experiment? If your monster is an intelligent humanoid, what sort of a cultural background and codes of behavior does it have, and how do these influence its interaction with the PCs? If people think the monster is a threat, why is it a threat in the first place? If you can't justify a monster's existence, you seriously jeopardize your players' suspension of disbelief.

Character consistency

Nonplayer characters also deserve logical consistency in a game. If they are well-drawn and colorful, with realistic motives and distinctive personalities, they are eagerly accepted as "real" by the players. An antipaladin who kills innocents and pulls wings off butterflies just because he's *eeevil* isn't believable as a villain. Villains can be totally psychotic, be vengeful of a past defeat or injury, worship a fiend who demands sacrifices in exchange for favors, or just be hungry for wealth or power; a motiveless villain who is bad "just because" strains belief to its limits. Unintelligent monsters' motives are usually pretty simple: They attack you because they are Neutral Hungry. Intelligent monsters should have correspondingly more complex motives, ranging from defending their territory or young to robbing you of your goods and gold (if these creatures appreciate the value of such things).

Even good-aligned people or creatures can be violently opposed to the party for various reasons, such as fanatical belief in a cause, disputes over land or property

rights, or a clash of cultures. To a typical elf or druid, the idea of land ownership might be utterly laughable. Who could possibly own Mother Earth? Any farming culture will disagree, and disputes might then arise over land use. The kender, a small mischievous race detailed in the DRAGONLANCE® books, don't even recognize individual property rights, and neither does the Innuit (Eskimo) culture of our own world. These and other cultural differences can lead to problems and result in no lack of challenges for the party.

Urban organization

The cities and villages you create for your world should have a practical economy, usually based on some surplus of production, be it cattle, grain, or rare magical herbs. The government should be congruent with the local economy and cultural values. An elven culture might be nature-oriented and freewheeling, disdaining authority. A human village might be crop-and-cattle oriented and highly class-conscious, ruled by a council of merchant elders or experienced farmers. An orcish culture might be based on fighting prowess and a military hierarchy, and its rulers might change monthly or yearly, as the assassination of superiors might be considered a socially acceptable way to move up in rank.

An isolated city or group might develop a specific and unique culture, perhaps similar to that of feudal Japan, which was based on honor and elaborate social rituals. A bit of forethought can add a great deal of local color to your city and the characters within it, making them easier to role-play.

An oft-neglected detail in the construction of cities is a fixed water supply, critical to any agrarian culture. Where is the water, how do the people send it to the city, and what happens if it fails? And what about sewage? No humanoid group of 20 or more can exist for long in one place without a consistent way to dispose of their wastes. This is one of the main reasons why hunter/gatherer cultures have to move around a lot—not to follow game, but to escape garbage. Medieval cities either solved that problem with some sort of sewage disposal system or else stank horribly and were filthy and disease-ridden.

Of course, with the assumption of working magic, the water supply or sewage system can be creatively supernatural. A good example of this is depicted in the Guardians of the Flame novels by Joel Rosenberg. In the city of Pandathaway, a baby dragon named Ellegon was chained in a pit to burn the city's waste byproducts. Said waste byproducts hit the proverbial fan when one of the heroes of the books released Ellegon and left the city without a viable sewage system. The city's rulers then had to pay outrageous sums to clerics and mages to magically incinerate the garbage, or have the streets piled malodorously high in no time. DMs can take their pick of methods, but should not ignore the issue altogether.

Magical *deus ex machina*

Another serious impediment to achieving a successful suspension of disbelief is *deus ex machina*, which is the use by an author or Dungeon Master of any event, item, or being to solve a messy situation in a simplistic and very unconvincing manner. This appears as an arbitrary plot device when seen in fantasy novels, or a conveniently placed magical item when seen in fantasy games. A horrendous profusion of such "convenient" items, acquired from "Monty Haul" DMs, adorns the character sheets of many players, making a 3rd-level thief a walking arsenal comparable to a SWAT team. ("What? You have **two** *wands of Orcus?")* Even without the problem of Monty Haul referees, a character who has played in enough campaigns will eventually pick up a lot of magical treasure. One or two magical items in the party can add creative spice to the game, giving the players more options to use in surmounting their challenges, but one or two items for every occasion is a sure plot-killer.

Try this quick trivia quiz: How many magical items were there among the entire party in *The Lord of the Rings* or *The Sword of Shannara*, or any other major fantasy novel for that matter? The answer is, invariably, "not many!" Why? Such items ruin the plot if at every hint of danger the heroes can whip out a magical thingamajig and neatly extricate themselves from any predicament. The vulnerability of the heroes who strain against overwhelming odds works in their favor to create an enjoyable plot. Published authors know that walking arsenals and arbitrary adventures will bore the waste byproducts out of their audience, and they don't inflict them on their readers. Many game referees would do well to emulate those authors.

Finding a balance between keeping up the willing suspension of disbelief and keeping the adventures exciting isn't always easy, but it is well worth doing, as any published author can tell you. So why isn't this principle valid in fantasy gaming as well as fantasy writing? Should it even apply to gaming at all? If you want to treat the D&D or AD&D system as a game in which the whole point is to garner treasure and magic and beat up the monsters, then probably not. If you treat your campaigns as interactive adventures, with your PCs as part of the plot, then the answer is most emphatically yes. Ω

HOBBYGAMES LTD™
(EUROPES LEADING DISTRIBUTOR)
UNIT S4 RUDFORD IND EST Nr ARUNDEL W SUSSEX BN18 OBD
TEL (0903) 730998 FAX (0903)731141
FOR THE LATEST RANGE OF FANTASY ROLE - PLAYING GAMES DICE AND ACCESSORIES
PALLADIUM TASKFORCE MAYFAIR GMT DGP ICE CHAOSIUM ATLAS LION RAMPANT FASA MITHRIL MINIATURES WEST END BTRC LEADING EDGE STEVE JACKSON TALSORIAN GDW WHITE WOLF ICE
ASK YOUR LOCAL HOBBY SHOP FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE
AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY TO HOBBYGAMES
100 SIDED DICE
GLITTER DICE
GLOW IN-THE-DARK DICE
30 SIDED GEM DICE
30 SIDED OPAQUE DICE
GEM PERCENTILE DICE
FLOOR PLANS
DICE BAGS
GAMES SCIENCE
HIGH IMPACT CRYSTAL DICE IN HEX DISPLAY TUBE
BATTLE MATS AVAILABLE IN 3 COLOURS
LARGE SELECTION OF POLY DICE IN ATTRACTIVE HEX DISPLAY TUBE
TWERPS
TWERPS BASIC
KUNG FU DRAGONS
TWERPS MAGIC
FLY BY KNIGHTS
SPACE CADETS
ROBO PUNK
SUPERDUDES
FREE SET OF POLY DICE &DICE BAG FOR FIRST ORDER WE SUPPLY TO A SHOP WE DO NOT ALREADY DEAL WITH RECOMENDED BY YOU !!
TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME UK AND OVERSEAS
SUPPLIERS TO ALL HOBBY AND GAMES STORES THROUGH OUT THE LAND

TAKE A STAND!

History isn't dead. It's alive and it's now.
Your warriors are at your back, companions by your side, weapons at the ready.
With Power flowing through you, it is time to make a stand.

Learn the Art of Magic ..

ARS MAGICA™

3RD EDITION



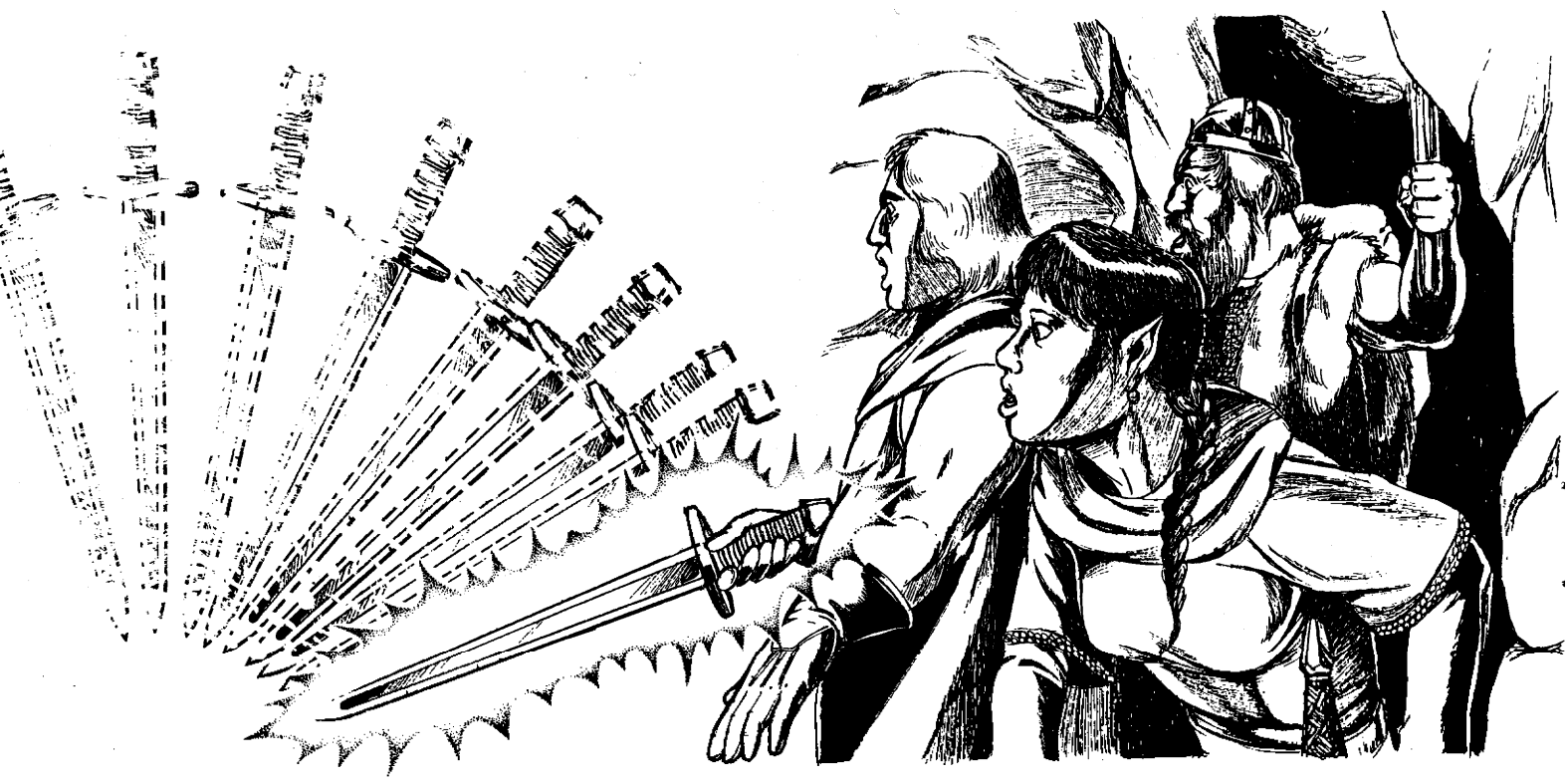
Purchase 3rd Edition Ars Magica in a game store near you.
It's more than just the best magic system in roleplaying.

WHITE WOLF™

A Renaissance in Games

Available in the UK from Esdevium Games.

Not *Another* Magical Sword!?!



Even the lowliest *sword + 1* should be unique

by Charles Rodgers

Take #1:
GM: "Ahead, through the doorway, Zandar sees a large reptilian shape."
Player: "Zandar pulls out his sword."
GM: "Which one?"
Player: "His *sword +2, +5 vs. dragons.*"
CUT!

Though I have played D&D® and AD&D® games for the last 12 years, I still have not seen adequate descriptive coverage of the weapons detailed in fantasy gaming. Most players can name 20-40 different types of medieval weapons. Some players might also remember how their characters obtained their current weapons. These same players, however, can't tell you the specifics about those weapons except for their official rule-book names (e.g., *sword +2, +5 vs. dragons).* The artists who depict the weapons used by our fantasy characters have been doing an excellent job. It is time for the writers and gamers to catch up.

Most weapons outlast the characters wielding them, being passed on to fellow characters or subsequent generations. Some of these weapons may be complex enough to deserve their own record sheets. Every weapon should have at least a name. Even a high-quality dagger costing 20 gp should receive a nickname from its owner; names like Small Fry, Needle, or Minimal might apply,

I also feel that not every weapon with a bonus to hit should be considered magical. A weapon might be superior in balance, have an exceptionally keen edge, be of superior workmanship, or boast exotic steel in its blade. It might have special magical powers due to certain features on the weapon itself, though the blade is not itself magical. If characters use their nonmagical weapons to pry open gates and chests, these nonmagical bonuses won't last for long. Any weapon with bonuses of + 3 or more should exhibit some type of magical enhancement that was given for a logical reason.

The following are just a few of the many possible materials to increase our options on weapon detail. Be creative in the weapons used in your campaign.

Brainstorming blades

The following are suggestions for the materials, shapes, and decorations for fantasy swords. After that is a format for detailing a magical blade and some questions that should be answered when a DM creates any magical weapon for use in his campaign.

Steel-alloyed blade materials: Mithril, adamantite, stainless, high carbon (will rust), damascus (layered steel).

Other blade materials (magically strengthened): Crystal or glass (with *glassteel)*, obsidian, ceramic, bone.

Blade shapes and features: Straight, curved, tapered, kris (wavy blade), blood grooves (fullers), notches.

Hand-guard materials: Brass, bronze, steel, nickel.

Hand-guard shapes: Arched snakes, clenched fists, clashing dragons, human or godlike forms.

Handle materials: Ivory, fossilized ivory, antler, horn, human or monster bone, dragon teeth, ebony or exotic wood, marble, jade, leather-wrapped metal.

Handle shapes and features: Straight, tapered, fluted (with straight or spiral grooves), prism (flat sides, not rounded), hand-fitted, hollow (detachable pommel; can hold small items like gems, coins, small tools, papers, liquid).

Pommel materials: Steel, crystal, or large gemstone (magically strengthened).

Pommel shapes and features: Monster's head, cross, skull, holy symbol, treetop, hand or paw, short blade.

Accents: Word engravings, picture carvings or etchings, magical runes, precious metal inlays, jewels and gems.

The FORGOTTEN REALMS® accessory, FR4 *The Magister*, has a few good examples of sword detail. I propose to take this one step further and use the standardized outline that follows for swords and all other remarkable weapons:

Name of weapon: This can be assigned by the DM or given by the bearer of the weapon.

Gold-piece value: This is the average value of the weapon if sold, provided a suitable buyer can be found.

Legend: This part details the weapon's history: Where did the weapon originate? Are there others like it? Who made the weapon, and how? What is the age of the weapon? Why was the weapon made? Who were some of its previous owners? In what great battles was the weapon used? Where was it last known to be? (Please note that not all of a weapon's legend will necessarily be true; the legend reflects what most people know of it.)

Appearance: A precise verbal depiction of the weapon should be given, answering questions like: How big is it? What materials were used in its making, and how? What is the guard made of, and in what configuration? What are the handle and pommel made of? What shapes and patterns are present on the weapon? What writing, if any, is evident, and in what language? Is the weapon usually found in a sheath, box, or some other type of container? (The previous suggestions can help you make these decisions quickly).

Combat bonuses: All bonuses or penalties to attack and damage are given here, including those against special opponents (e.g., lawful beings, dragons, shape changers, etc.).

Magical abilities: Here are detailed all special powers granting detection abilities, *light* emission, *dancing*, *sharpness*, etc. How and when such powers operate are also described.

Intelligence: If the weapon is capable of thought, the intelligence score is given.

Ego: If the weapon has willpower, the ego score is noted here.

Alignment: The weapon's alignment, if any, is given here.

Communication: All means of communication that the weapon is capable of are given here, including spoken languages, empathy, telepathy, pointing, pulsating glow, or moving runes that form words along the handle or blade.

Personality: If the weapon is intelligent, has an ego, and can communicate, the details of its habits, typical responses, likes and dislikes, and other personality notes should be given as well, with notes on how it is likely to interact with anyone who picks up the weapon or activates its powers.

Other: Other questions that need to be answered concerning the new weapon are: How can this weapon be destroyed or its powers reduced or negated? Is anyone currently seeking this weapon, and does someone already have it? What possible adventures involve this weapon?

Two good blades

What follows are examples of two weapons using the format suggested in this article. These are weapons from my own campaign but have been slightly modified to fit the FORGOTTEN REALMS® campaign world, so that they might be more useful to other gamers.

Soulseeker

Gold-piece value: 7,500 gp

Legend: From the volcanoes of the Great Sand Sea come large amounts of lava, some of which has large pieces of obsidian in it. The desert nomads have learned the art of flint napping and have used obsidian tips on their spears for centuries. Highly skilled artisans are able to make large blades for daggers. *Soulseeker* is such a blade.

A war fought deep in the Underdark's caverns resulted in the destruction of

many of the evil creatures involved. The remains of some of the vilest fiends were melted into a magical lava flow, forming an especially large chunk of obsidian. One of the great blade makers used this piece of obsidian to make Soulseeker. The name is derived from the fact that the fiends flesh in the blade is constantly seeking a soul for itself. This blade has killed many times and still seeks more souls.

The blade traveled from the Great Sand Sea to the trading cities. A blade collector in Waterdeep sent for the dagger, but Soulseeker never reached its destination because of a theft from a trading caravan. The last known rumor is that the blade is in the hands of Waterdeep's black market, perhaps having made its way to the city of Skullport (from the *Ruins of Undermountain* boxed set and DRAGON® issue #172, "Seeing the Sights of Skullport").

Appearance: Soulseeker has a 20-cm glassy-black obsidian blade that is approximately 4 cm wide at the guard. The blade was made using flint napping and has a slow taper to the point. The handle is made of fossilized ivory, the guard is gold with inlaid runes of onyx, and the butt cap is also of gold and onyx. The blade travels in a silk-lined case made of ebony, with gold hinges and a cover that is a thin sheet of translucent obsidian.

Combat bonuses: + 2 to hit; + 5 to damage

Magical abilities: Soul stealing (see following) on a failed saving throw vs. death magic; *detect evil/good* in a 60′ radius; *detect invisible objects* in a 10′ radius; *detect magic* in a 30′ radius.

This blade has one of the sharpest edges available. Obsidian edges are prized by the nomad healers for use in surgical procedures. The strongest power of Soulseeker is its stealing of souls. Anyone who is hit by the blade with a natural 20 must save vs. death magic or lose his soul to the blade, dying at once. If the victim dies from a hit by the blade, his soul is automatically taken into the blade, and the creature cannot be *resurrected.* Only a ***wish*** spell will bring back a soul and permit *resurrection.* Those of alignments other than that of the blade suffer 1d6 hp damage every round they touch any part of this weapon, unless they are its victim and suffer damage as detailed otherwise.

Intelligence: 17

Ego: 16

Alignment: CE

Communication: Speaks Common.

Personality: Soulseeker makes no pretense of its true goals, but it is remarkably seductive to any chaotic-evil being that grasps its hilt. It always tries to control its owner and urge him to slay victims at every possibly turn, seeking all souls possible, though it will encourage stealth and duplicity to keep the killing spree going as long as it can. Soulseeker especially seeks victims of high level or high social standing, gladly stealing the soul of a great wizard, mayor, priest, or general.

Other: Soulseeker saves against attacks as rock +2 and can be destroyed in any number of ways. Two good-aligned churches, one assassins' guild, and four adventuring parties are currently seeking this weapon to either destroy or make use of this item.

Spellbinder

Gold-piece value: 10,000 gp

Legend: A warrior named Algor and a nameless, evil wizard decided to end their feud of many years with a duel. Algor, realizing his magical inferiority, had a special sword crafted that would absorb spells cast by an opponent. On the day of the duel, Algor presumed he was now superior, but he should not have trusted an evil wizard to fight fair. At a decisive moment in their battle, the wizard was joined by two of his evil cohorts. Simultaneously, all three blasted Algor with spells. Algor was annihilated, and his possessions were thrown across space and time. Several years and many miles away, a farmer found Algor's sword in his field, and he traded the blade for animals and equipment. The sword has changed hands many times since. Spellbinder was once reported to have been offered as payment for a glass of ale in a tavern. Most of its owners never realized Spellbinder's full potential. Spellbinder was also known as Algor's Weakness after its history was made public by a wizard-sage.

Appearance: The extremely sharp layered-steel blade is 120 cm long; overall, this well-balanced weapon measures 160 cm. The blade has a single blood groove and two bilateral notches near the base. The handle is of deeply fluted dragon bone with a gold ring at each end of the flutes. The guard is curved toward the point and ends in two claws grasping crystalline spheres. The face of the guard has two large triangular sapphires with their points together. The pommel is conical. If found, the crystal spheres will probably already be shattered or absent.

Combat bonuses: + 2 to hit; + 3 to damage

Magical abilities: Absorbs (as a *rod of absorption)* up to 12 levels of wizard or cleric spells (12 first-level spells, or six second-level spells, etc.); *detects magic* in a 30′ radius.

This sword can be wielded by members of any alignment. The sword must be held by its handle to absorb incoming spells; no part of the hand can touch the blade or guard. The crystal spheres absorb the spells, each sphere absorbing six levels. If the wielder attempts to absorb more than this amount in a single round without discharging some of the spell energy, the spheres shatter and the sword no longer absorbs any spell levels until the crystals are replaced (they can be had at glassware shops for roughly 50 gp each, but enchanting each of the spheres with the proper spells is quite a bit more expensive, requiring a wizard of 16th level or greater).

Intelligence: 12

Ego: 11

Alignment: N

Communication: Empathy.

Personality: Spellbinder is a bit of a snob and wants an owner that it cannot easily control. In the past, Spellbinder has constantly kept on the move from owner to owner, forcing its user to trade it away if he did not measure up to the sword's standards. It is currently seeking an owner who understands the schools of magic, preferably a fighter-wizard. The weapon wants to be polished often and kept in a nice, gem-encrusted scabbard.

Other: The evil wizard who engineered Algor's death has since become a lich. As a side interest, the lich has begun to look into rumors of a sword matching the one Algor used against it years ago, and it would like to obtain this weapon simply to add to its trophy collection.

With all of this information in mind, let's revisit the opening scene in this article:

Take #2:

GM: "Ahead, through the doorway, Zandar sees a large reptilian shape."

Player: "He unsheathes Drakedoom and waves its kris blade before him."

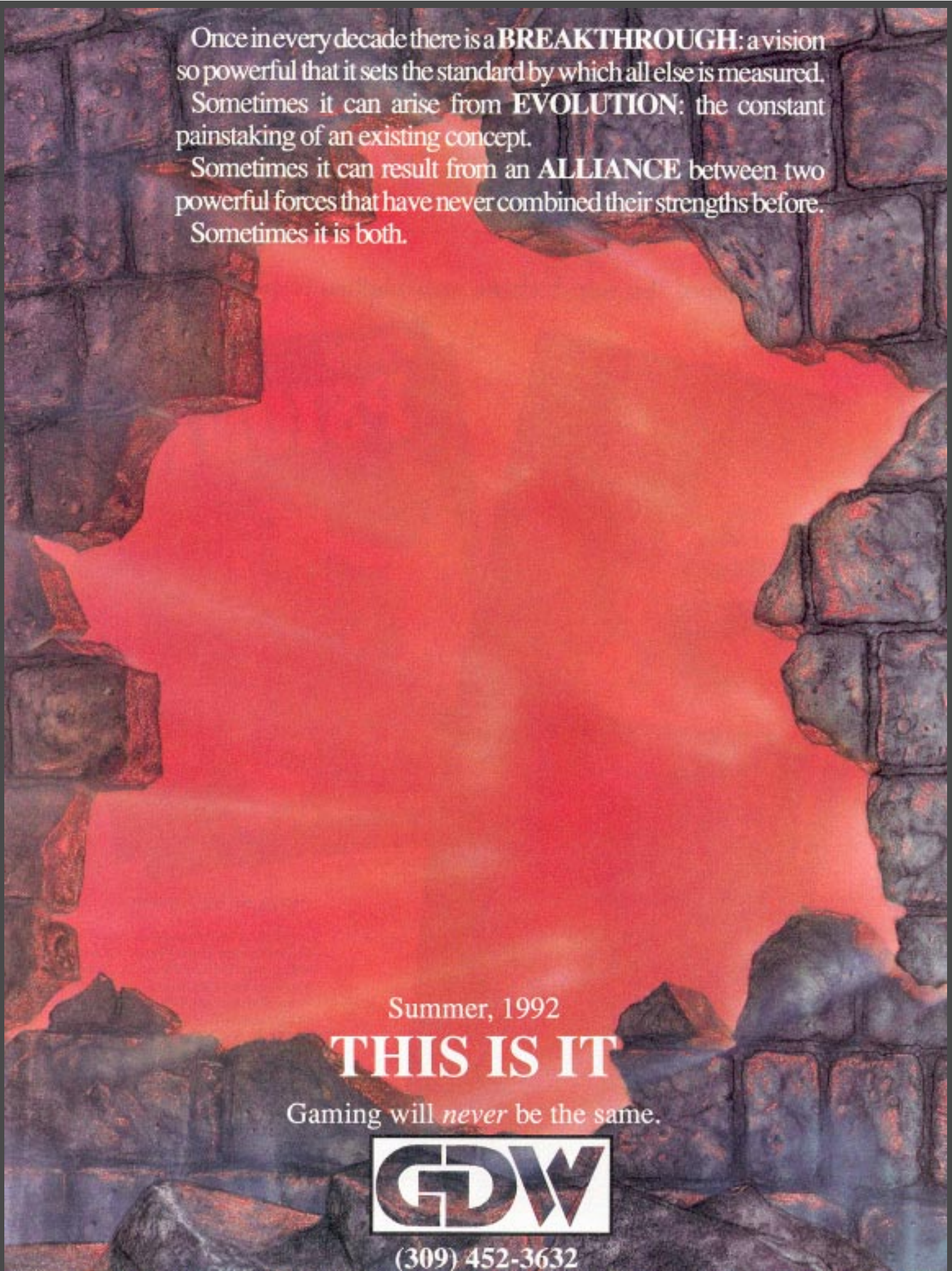
GM: "His blade's blue-marble handle gives off a soft fluorescent glow."

Player: "Ah, so the exquisitely sharp edges of the sword will penetrate the dragon's scales!"

GM: "Roll for initiative."

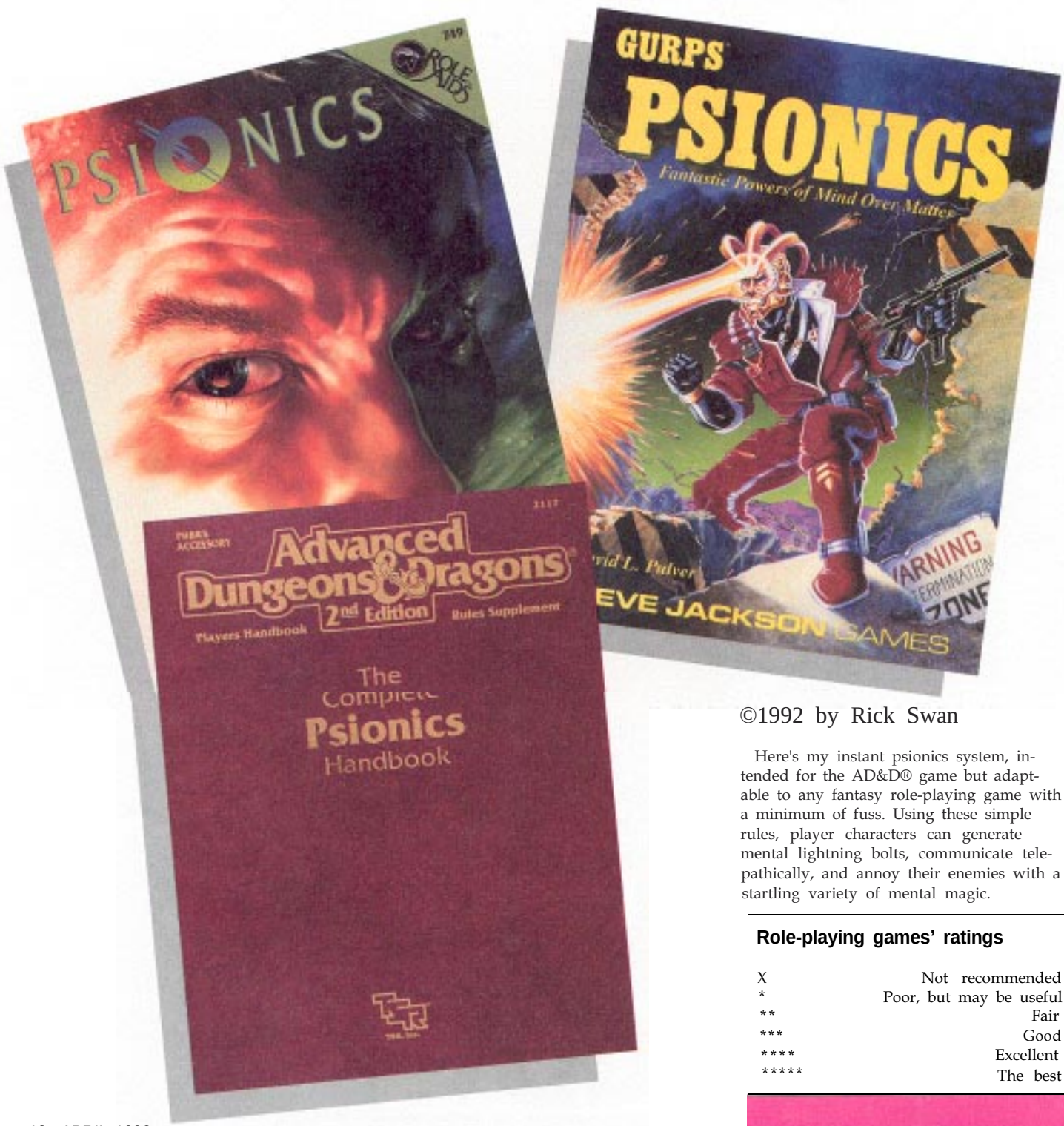
We're Fighting For Your Life.
American Heart Association

Free Catalog!
Free
Free
Free
Free
Write for your free catalog of games and gaming supplies! In the United States and Canada, write to: TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop, c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: TSR Mail Order Catalogue, TSR Ltd, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. Send for it today!


Once in every decade there is a **BREAKTHROUGH**: a vision so powerful that it sets the standard by which all else is measured.
Sometimes it can arise from **EVOLUTION**: the constant painstaking of an existing concept.
Sometimes it can result from an **ALLIANCE** between two powerful forces that have never combined their strengths before.
Sometimes it is both.
Summer, 1992
THIS IS IT
Gaming will *never* be the same.
GDW
(309) 452-3632

Role-playing reviews

Magic of the mind: three approaches to psionics



©1992 by Rick Swan

Here's my instant psionics system, intended for the AD&D® game but adaptable to any fantasy role-playing game with a minimum of fuss. Using these simple rules, player characters can generate mental lightning bolts, communicate telepathically, and annoy their enemies with a startling variety of mental magic.

Role-playing games' ratings

X	Not recommended
*	Poor, but may be useful
**	Fair
***	Good
****	Excellent
*****	The best

1. Every wizard and priest spell has a psionic equivalent, the only difference being that the name of the spell is prefaced by either "psi" or "mind," as determined by the Dungeon Master. For instance, *blindness* becomes Psiblindness, and *knock* becomes Mindknock.

2. At the beginning of each day, a PC receives a number of Brain Cell Points (BCPs) equal to his intelligence score. To use a psionic power, he expends a number of BCPs equal to the power's level. For instance, using Psiblindness costs 2 BCPs, while Mindknock costs 3 BCPs.

3. A psionicist uses his powers in the same way as a wizard or priest casts spells, except there aren't any verbal, somatic, or material components; the powers come directly from his mind. The effects of a psionic power are identical to those of the corresponding spell.

4. When a PC runs out of BCPs, he can't use any more psionic powers. He recovers a full load of BCPs the next day.

What's that, you say? My system's no good? Too simple-minded? Too much like magic? No significant effect on the play of the game?

Okay, you're right—it stinks. But it's only marginally worse than the psionics systems in most RPGs. Designers often acknowledge the potential of psionics by including psionic-like elements in their games, but they seldom come up with a coherent, inventive approach to the concept as a whole. Usually, the psionics system turns out to be either just another magic variant (as in Palladium Games' PALLADIUM ROLE-PLAYING GAME*, which makes a cursory attempt at distinguishing psionics from magic by using inner strength points and mind mages, but muddies the water with levels and saving throws), just another collection of spells (as in The Avalon Hill Game Company's RUNEQUEST* game, in which psionic-styled powers like *mindlink* and *mindspeak* are lumped in with the magic system), or a set of vaguely defined rules bordering on the incomprehensible (as in the AD&D 1st Edition game—I never *did* get the hang of attack and defense modes).

So, what's the problem? In a nutshell, psionics is too complex to be adequately covered in a skimpy appendix or a few paragraphs of optional rules. The topic is rich enough to merit a full-length book that ideally should address all of the following:

Premise: What's the rationale for psionics in the campaign world? Who gets psionic powers, and why? Is psionics supernatural or scientific; is it learned or innate? Are there special psionic character classes? What distinguishes psionics from magic?

Mechanics: A good psionics game system requires complete, understandable, and logical rules for the acquisition and execution of psionic powers. The rules should be self-contained and original, not clones of the magic system.

Powers: Are there a variety of imaginative powers, effective enough to be fun to use but not so formidable as to unbalance a game? Are the effects of psionic powers clearly distinguishable from magic spells?

Psychic combat: Is there a clever system for staging psychic duels? Is psychic combat an exciting contest in which opponents make meaningful choices with dramatic results, or a tedious exercise in dice-rolling?

Extras: These aren't necessary, but they are nice. Possibilities include role-playing tips for psionic characters, psionic NPCs and organizations, and adventure outlines.

Thankfully, the folks at TSR, Inc., Mayfair Games, and Steve Jackson Games have risen to the occasion with the release of the supplements discussed here. Since each book has a distinct emphasis and approach, and none is adaptable to all styles of play, there's no clear winner. However, they're all comprehensive, intelligent, and entertaining treatments of a topic that's gotten the short shrift far too often.

The Complete Psionics Handbook ***½

128-page softcover book
TSR, Inc. $15
Design: Steve Winter (monster updates by Blake Mobley)
Editing: Andria Hayday
Illustrations: Terry Dykstra, Dee Barnett
Graphic design: Stephanie Tabat

One of the curiosities in the AD&D 2nd Edition revision was the absence of psionics rules. While nobody really believed that TSR would abandon the concept altogether (not with monsters like the thought eater and cerebral parasite still running loose in pre-existing AD&D campaigns), I still doubt that anyone expected anything as radical as the *The Complete Psionics Handbook*. Considering that the 1st Edition rules amounted to little more than an appendix in the *Players Handbook* with a few pages of combat rules in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* thrown in, a 128-page expansion may strike some as not only too much of a good thing but downright intimidating. Is all this (groan) yet another set of rules?

Not to worry. Most of the book consists of power descriptions; the rest is a straightforward presentation of an easily managed and highly playable system that clears up the ambiguities in the 1st Edition game and adds a number of elegant new touches. So appealing is the new approach that about an hour after I eased psionics into my AD&D campaign, all four of my players were itching to abandon their long-standing fighters and wizards and start from scratch as psionicists.

Premise: AD&D game psionics is now the domain of an entirely new character class called, appropriately enough, the psionicist. Just as the fighter's abilities derive from strength and the wizards talents stem from his intelligence, the psionicist's skills are based on wisdom and constitution. Beyond minimum wisdom, constitution, and intelligence scores, psionicist requirements aren't significantly more restrictive than for any other class. Though humans can attain higher levels of expertise, all races are eligible. Chaotic characters, however, aren't allowed to become psionicists, the rationale being that volatile chaotics lack the discipline required to focus their mental energies, It's an understandable limitation in the context of the rules, but an unfortunate one in terms of drama, as it seems to eliminate the possibility of scenarios featuring psionic loonies on brain-blasting rampages, leveling villages and disintegrating innocent bystanders. But you can't have everything.

Psionic powers are assigned to six disciplines, roughly comparable to a wizards schools of magic or a priest's spell spheres. Disciplines include clairsentience (comparable to the greater divination magic school), psychokinesis (animating and controlling existing objects and forces), psychometabolism (body-changing powers), psychoportation (teleportation variants), telepathy (mental communication and psychic attacks), and metapsionics (enhancement of other psychic abilities). Powers aren't assigned levels like magic spells; rather, they're designated as either sciences (major powers) or devotions (minor powers). As a psionicist gains experience and advances in level, he acquires more powers; for instance, a 1st-level psionicist has only one science and three devotions, but gets 10 sciences and 25 devotions if he makes it to 20th level. As a psionicist rises through the ranks, he also gains access to defense modes, a concept carried over from the 1st Edition rules but refined and clarified in this handbook. The defense modes are special telepathic powers, such as Mind Blank and Tower of Iron Will, which are received free of charge and don't count against a psionicist's normal power limits.

Mechanics: The use of psionic powers involves a variant of the proficiencies system developed in the 2nd Edition rules. Each power has a score rated in terms of a particular attribute; Tower of Iron Will, for instance, has a Power Score of Wis - 2. When attempting to use a power, the player makes a Power Check by rolling 1d20 and comparing the result to the Power Score. A roll less than or equal to the Power Score means success; if the PC's wisdom score is 16, a roll of 14 or less is needed to use Tower of Iron Will. Additionally, each power description includes a specific penalty suffered by the psionicist if a 20 is rolled; if the Tower of Iron Will roll is 20, the psionicist is unable to engage in psionic activity for 1d4 hours.

A psionicist has a fixed number of Psionic Strength Points, derived from his

wisdom score, to expend on psionic powers. Instead of memorizing spells like a wizard or praying for magic like a priest, a psionicist simply expends the number of PSPs required by a particular power (6 PSPs for Tower of Iron Will), then attempts a Power Check. If the check fails and the power doesn't work, he forfeits half the PSP cost but is free to try again later. If he passes the check and the power is successful, the psionicist has the option of expending additional PSPs to maintain the power in subsequent rounds. The basic procedure is similar to the magic-point system used in other fantasy games (such as the RUNEQUEST game) and has the obvious advantage of increasing the player's options and giving him more control over his actions.

Psionicists recover lost PSPs every hour in which no additional PSPs are expended. The less physical exertion, the more PSPs recovered; a walking PC recovers 3 PSPs per hour, and a resting PC recovers twice as many. The recovery system makes sense, but it's a pain to manage; not only must the DM keep track of time to the hour (awkward even in the best of circumstances), he also must estimate activity levels (difficult in complex encounters). I'd have preferred something along the lines of automatic recovery after a good night's sleep. This reservation aside, the rules as a whole are succinct, entertaining, and—best of all—distinct from those governing spell-casting.

Powers: There are powers galore, over 150 of them, some expected and pedestrian (Enhanced Strength, Inflict Pain), others wildly off-beat (Switch Personality, Hear Light, Psychic Surgery). Many push the limits of what I consider to be mind-associated effects, such as Flesh Armor (the user's skin turns to leather or plate mail) and Cause Decay (the user's touch rusts metal or rots wood), but that doesn't mean they're not fun to use. I'm always willing to give my credibility another stretch in the name of a good time. More vexing is the clutter of powers that echo existing wizard and priest effects; Levitation, ESP, Teleport, and Clairaudience are minor variants on the similarly named magic spells. While no psionics system would be complete without these, I can't help but wish that the designer had gone the extra mile and come up with another twist or two to distinguish them from their wizardly counterparts.

Psychic combat: Psychic combat merits its own chapter, good news for those of us who relish the idea of brain duels but have never figured out a satisfying way to stage them. Unfortunately, the standard rules for adjudicating psionic clashes boil down to dice-tossing festivals; the best rolls win, and that's about it. Much better are the rules for telepathic combat, an elaborate rock-scissors-stone variant involving the play of defense and attack modes, and establishing partial contact (called tangents) to destabilize the enemy.

Extras: The book takes a no-nonsense, nuts and bolts approach to psionics, which means that it's long on game mechanics and power descriptions but short on game-mastering advice and campaign design. Aside from updates on psionic monsters (including the thought eater and cerebral parasite), there's not much here in the way of extras. The discussion of society's reaction to psionicists is informative but all too brief, and the section describing the role of psionics in RAVENLOFT™ and other TSR campaign settings is frustratingly superficial. I'd have gladly traded a dozen or so power descriptions for a chapter or two of adventure outlines and role-playing tips. [See *DRAGON® Magazine issue #174 for "Are You Having Bad Thoughts?" an article by RAVENLOFT designer Bruce Nesmith that details how psionics work in the Demiplane of Dread.]*

Evaluation: The triumph of *The Complete Psionics Handbook* is its clear delineation of the differences between magic and psionics. The deceptively simple mechanics complement the rules for spell-casters without slavishly copying them, which makes playing a psionicist a unique and memorable experience. By assigning powers to sciences and devotions instead of levels, and allowing easy access to the disciplines, the rules give the psionicist a freedom of choice that the wizard and priest can only envy.

Psionics ***

128-page softcover book
Mayfair Games Inc. $12
Design: Nigel Findley
Editing: Jeff R. Leason
Illustrations: Bob Giadrosich
Cover art: David Dorman

A recent entry in Mayfair's excellent ROLE AIDS* series, *Psionics* is literately written and imaginatively conceived. While the distinctions between psionics and magic aren't as well drawn as those in *The Complete Psionics Handbook*, its unusual approach and provocative powers make it a viable alternative.

Premise: As in the TSR version, the Mayfair psionicist is treated as a separate character class, requiring a minimum wisdom (or Insight, in ROLE AIDS-speak) of 13. Only humans are eligible for psionic skills; despite the litany of justifications for this (humans are better motivated than other races, elves and dwarves lack the right type of brains, limiting psionics to humans better balances the game), I'm not convinced there's any compelling need for such a rigid restriction. Place limits on a demihuman's psionic powers, if you must, but there's no reason to deny a campaign the pleasure of an elven telepath.

Psionic powers are sorted into five schools: somniomancy (abilities related to sleeping and dreaming), telepathy (thought transfer and mind reading), telekinetics (matter manipulation), pyromancy (temperature and energy control, particularly as applied to fire), and empathy (emotional bonding). The somniomancy and pyromancy schools are especially intriguing, having no clear parallels in any other psionics system that I know of. The spectacular powers of the pyromancer make him as formidable and as fun to play as any wizard, and though the somniomancer's skills are a bit on the passive side, experienced role-players will find mastery of the school to be an appealing challenge. Unfortunately, once a character decides to become a psionicist, he must also declare his allegiance to a particular school, and having done so, he's totally denied access to the powers of all the other schools. It's another puzzling, unnecessary limitation.

Each school consists of six levels. As a psionicist becomes more experienced, he's able to use higher-level powers, not unlike a wizard or priest. Acquiring new powers is by no means automatic; a psionicist must spend 1-2 days in study with an appropriate teacher (psionics can't be learned from books or scrolls), then must practice for another 1-3 days per level of the power. Whether he succeeds in mastering the skill depends on a die roll. If he fails, he can try to learn the power again when he advances to another level; if he fails twice, he can never learn it. The system makes the acquisition of new powers less of a sure thing, which is an arguably more realistic approach than that taken in *The Complete Psionics Handbook*, but it also requires a fair amount of bookkeeping, as somebody has to keep track of how many times each psionicist has attempted to learn the various powers; in a long campaign with a lot of psionicists, that can become real drudgery.

Mechanics: Psionicists use their powers by expending Mental Points (MPs); the higher the level of the psionicist, the more MPs he has to spend. A psionicist fully recovers his MP allotment after six hours of rest.

Except for the MP requirement, a psionicist employs a power in much the same way as a wizard casts a spell—that is, if he knows it, if he isn't interrupted, and if the target isn't eligible for a saving throw, the power generally succeeds. Though a psionicist with enough MP can use the same power repeatedly (unlike a wizard, who's limited to the spells he's memorized), psionics use doesn't feel much different from spell-casting; like a magic spell, a psionic power involves the use of verbal and somatic components, and there are no failure penalties or proficiency checks comparable to those in *The Complete Psionics Handbook*. A few interesting options allow the psionicist to modify his powers (for instance, he can spend extra MPs to increase slightly the damage caused by attacks), but these rules have only a modest effect on the fuzzy distinction between psionics and magic, which

remains the book's weakest feature.

Powers: Dozens of powers are included, a generous mix of the familiar (Know Alignment, Telepathy) and the exotic (Walking Nightmare, Enforced Wakefulness), with only a few truly dreary entries (such as Awaken, which allows the user to wake up a sleeping character without touch or sound—big deal!). Despite the occasional vague description and a few too many similarities with magic spells (neither Lightning Bolt nor Enlarge strike me as appropriate for a psionicist), it's an agreeable collection.

Psychic combat: A clever diceless system simulates mental duels. The attacker secretly selects the type of attack he's making, then declares the number of MPs expended. The defender deflects the attack by expending half the number of MPs declared by the enemy, counterattacks by expending more MPs than the attacker, or does nothing and takes damage. Presuming the referee monitors the action and keeps everyone honest, a combatant can never be sure how many MPs the other guy has or the type of attack he's attempting, making for a fast-moving, exciting engagement.

Extras: In addition to power descriptions, each school's section features an informative discussion of the philosophy and combat techniques of the relevant practitioner, along with a selection of appropriate magical items *(incense of dreaming* for the somniomancer, a *ring of suppression* for the telekineticist) and a sample NPC. The final section includes a handful of short but engaging plot outlines.

Evaluation: Though the book abounds with interesting powers and role-playing notes, the frustrating restrictions (one school per psionicist, for humans only) makes it more useful as a source of ideas than a set of rules. Surprisingly, despite the sizeable number of powers in both this and *The Complete Psionics Handbook*, there's an insignificant amount of overlap, and elements of both could conceivably be incorporated into the same campaign.

GURPS Psionics* game * * *½
128-page softcover book
Steve Jackson Games $17
Design: David L. Pulver
Editing: Lloyd Blankenship, Creede Lambard, Steve Jackson
Illustrations: Rick Harris, Charlie Wiedman, Doug Shuler, Evan Dorkin, Angela Bostick, Rick Lowry, Mike Scott
Cover art: David Patrick Menehan

Based on concepts introduced in the GURPS* Basic Set, the GURPS Psionics book offers an impressive and wide-ranging smorgasbord of ideas adaptable to horror, science-fiction, and virtually any other role-playing genre. While considerably more ambitious than the TSR and Mayfair books, the GURPS Psionics book is also less focused; not only do the rules resist translation to other game systems, a GM wanting to dig out the material specifically suitable for, say, a fantasy campaign has his work cut out for him.

Premise: Since the absence of character classes is a hallmark of the GURPS system, designer David Pulver treats psionics as just another collection of skills purchased as part of character design, then modified by power levels (the general potency of a skill), skill levels (a measure of the character's innate ability), enhancements (that increase a skills utility), and limitations (that decrease utility). Distinctions between a psionically skilled character and, for instance, a spell-caster are more likely to arise from actual role-playing than the rules themselves. That's fine for hardcore players, but those comfortable with rigid class definitions may find the generic approach of the GURPS game to be more frustrating than fun.

The GURPS Psionics book groups abilities into nine categories: antipsi (skills that neutralize other psionic characters), astral projection, electrokinesis (mental control of computers and electronics), ESP healing, psychic vampirism (skills that drain emotions, life forces, and dreams), psychokinesis (matter manipulation), telepathy, and teleportation. The categories include varying numbers of skills; telepathy lists more than 20, antipsi has a measly two. Electrokinesis, psychokinesis, telepathy, and teleportation cost five points per level, and the rest cost three points. The purchase of antipsi excludes the purchase of any other category.

Mechanics: In general, psionic abilities require skill rolls, a concept familiar to GURPS game veterans. A successful roll means the skill works as intended, a failed roll means the skill fizzles. Some skills may be resisted by the target, some cost the user fatigue points, and some may be sustained indefinitely if the skill rolls continue to be successful. If a skill fails against a particular target, the user may try again in five minutes, but the attempt costs him a fatigue point and a penalty to his roll. He can continue to expend fatigue points until the skill succeeds or he collapses from the strain, a clever rule that appropriately punishes a psionicist too stubborn to know when to quit.

The chapter devoted to advanced techniques is the books best feature, a fascinating array of defensive and offensive tactics. Rules for power tapping, mindwipes, and telepathic gestalts include detailed examples of play, along with guidelines for adjudicating unusual situations. (Wonder what happens when a psionicist teleports from his house to a swimming pool? His living room fills with water.) Those dismissing psionicists as docile mind-readers will be surprised at just how nasty a psi-warrior can be when he employs the offensive techniques described here; Deathscream, for instance, rattles the brains of everyone in the immediate area, while Combat Exoteleport materializes solid objects inside an enemy's body with appropriately grisly results.

Some of the techniques require a bit too much number juggling for my taste. Consider, for example, the use of the Telereceive ability. In a combat situation, a Telereceive attempt involves a Concentration maneuver, application of the target's Mind Shield and Strong Will factors, and a success roll of at least three points, which results in a +2 to the user's active defenses and a - 1 penalty to the target's defenses. Additionally, the target may attempt to counter the attempt by "fighting without planning," which restricts the option to Feint and reduces the skill level by three, unless the Combat Reflex modifier is applicable, in which case the skill is reduced by two. That strikes me as a lot of work just to read someone's mind.

Powers: The GURPS Psionics book tends to encourage the development of previously acquired skills rather than the greedy acquisition of new ones. Only about 50 skills are included, and it's a so-so collection; many duplicate the effects traditionally associated with magic spells (Illusion, Healing, Lightning), and some are mere variants of each other (Mental Blow and Mental Stab, Autoteleport and Exoteleport). The telepathy category has the broadest and most interesting selection of powers, ranging from Emotion Sense and Telescan, to Mindsword and Signature Sniffer.

Psychic combat: With only the basic rules, a psychic duel conceivably could be staged with only a handful of skill rolls, the results being quick and convincing but not particularly dramatic. Using the maneuvers described in the advanced techniques chapter, a psychic duel can become a full-blown game in itself; it took me a full hour to stage a telepathic battle between two reasonably skilled psionicists, and I admittedly ignored or took a wild guess at some of the more esoteric details. (Does Player A's character know Player B's character well enough to earn a + 1 bonus for the Mental Blow skill? Beats me.) Whether this level of complexity is excruciating or exhilarating depends on the strength of your wrist (there's a *lot* of die-rolling) and your willingness to navigate a lot of tricky rules. Once I got the hang of it, the system impressed me as the best of its kind, but it's not recommended for the impatient.

Extras: Despite the detour into parapsychology (a superfluous chapter describing poltergeists and other scary stuff that should have remained in the GURPS Horror* game), the supplementary material is first-rate. The psychotronics chapter catalogs an assortment of psi-tech devices in lavish detail, including dreamscanners, psionic computers, and my favorite, psiberplas, an organic plastic that changes shape into response to psychokinetic impulses. Equally fascinating are the brain tissue grafts, psiborgs, and symbiotic crystals featured in the bio-psi chapter, any of which could serve as a springboard



TOTAL WAR™

Marshal your nation to global domination or face utter destruction

Antiquated armies would take months to cross continents & oceans to engage in battles that lasted for weeks and wars that could last for 100 years. Intercontinental conflicts now take only minutes and leave an apocalyptic path in their wake.

This boardgame strategically abstracts the evolution of the modern war machine. Players control research, production & strategic deployment of forces ranging from infantry through tanks, planes and missiles up to nuclear weapons.

PANTHEON
The Game of Gods

Just another wargame with hexes & armies but This time ...*You're a God!*

If Total War or Pantheon are not available at your local retailer don't nuke him into the stone age. Just send $24.95 for Pantheon or $29.95 for Total War (plus $3.00 shipping and handling) to:

Gamesmiths
P.O. Box 2133
El Segundo, CA
90245

Californians add 7% sales tax

for a compelling adventure.

There's more. The chapter devoted to psionic NPCs describes both the obvious (the mystic, the ghost hunter) and the eccentric (the precocious child, the puppet master). The copious campaign material includes outlines for staging adventures in super-hero, witch-hunting, and postapocalyptic settings, along with hints for incorporating psionics into GURPS supplements as far-ranging as the GURPS Cliffhangers and GURPS Martial Arts books. A fully developed world background called "The Phoenix Project" features a secret organization dedicated to the promotion of psionic technology as a catalyst for world peace; the bad guys include the Eugenic Security Police, a fanatic branch of the Federal government bent on stamping out "abnormal genetic material," and the Overmind Institute, a covert band of crazed technologists who support themselves by peddling mind-bending psi drugs and training psionic criminals.

Evaluation: The GURPS Psionics book has a more contemporary emphasis than either the TSR or Mayfair books, and it works best in a cyberpunk, science-fiction, or modern horror setting. It's less suitable for fantasy; in fact, the fantasy elements are underplayed throughout, mainly limited to a few sidebars that explain the relationship of psionics and magic (which is nothing special). The powers themselves aren't anything out of the ordinary, but their application in terms of role-playing and advanced mechanics makes this the most sophisticated psionics system to date. The sheer volume of material here may give novices a headache, but for experienced players, this may be the system of their dreams.

Short and sweet

Wilderness Encounters, by Roy Cram. Flying Buffalo, Inc., $10. Strictly speaking, this collection of 17 short scenarios (adaptable, with effort, to any fantasy campaign) has less to do with the wilderness than the monsters who live there. Reminiscent of TSR's *Book of Lairs* from a few years back, each scenario features one major critter along with a few of its critter lieutenants, a reasonably thorough description of its hideaway, and a handful of story hooks to motivate an investigation. The scenarios range from the seen-it-before (a goblin cave, a haunted pool) to the appealingly goofy (a giant hornet's nest, a giant spider's hole, a giant ant hill—the designer has a thing for the multilegged). With creatures called Slippery Slimes and an NPC named Warren Peece, a high tolerance for whimsy is a must. The ideas are old-fashioned, but they're still fun.

Draconomicon, by Nigel Findley (with adventures by Christopher Kubasik, Carl Sargent, John Terra, William Tracy). TSR, Inc., $15. The busy Mr. Findley strikes again with this entertaining collection of draconic odds and ends. The fanciful essays discussing behavior and customs (ever wonder how a copper dragon celebrates his 51st birthday?) makes for a delightful read, while the SPELLJAMMER™ material clears up a few questions about dragons in space. Less successful are the adventures, four rather routine excursions that feature promising plots but suffer from a lack of development; one or two longer adventures would have been preferable to four short ones. And yes, there are new dragons, among them steel, yellow, and mercury. (How long before the fiberglass, cardboard, and polyester versions come crawling out of their caves?)

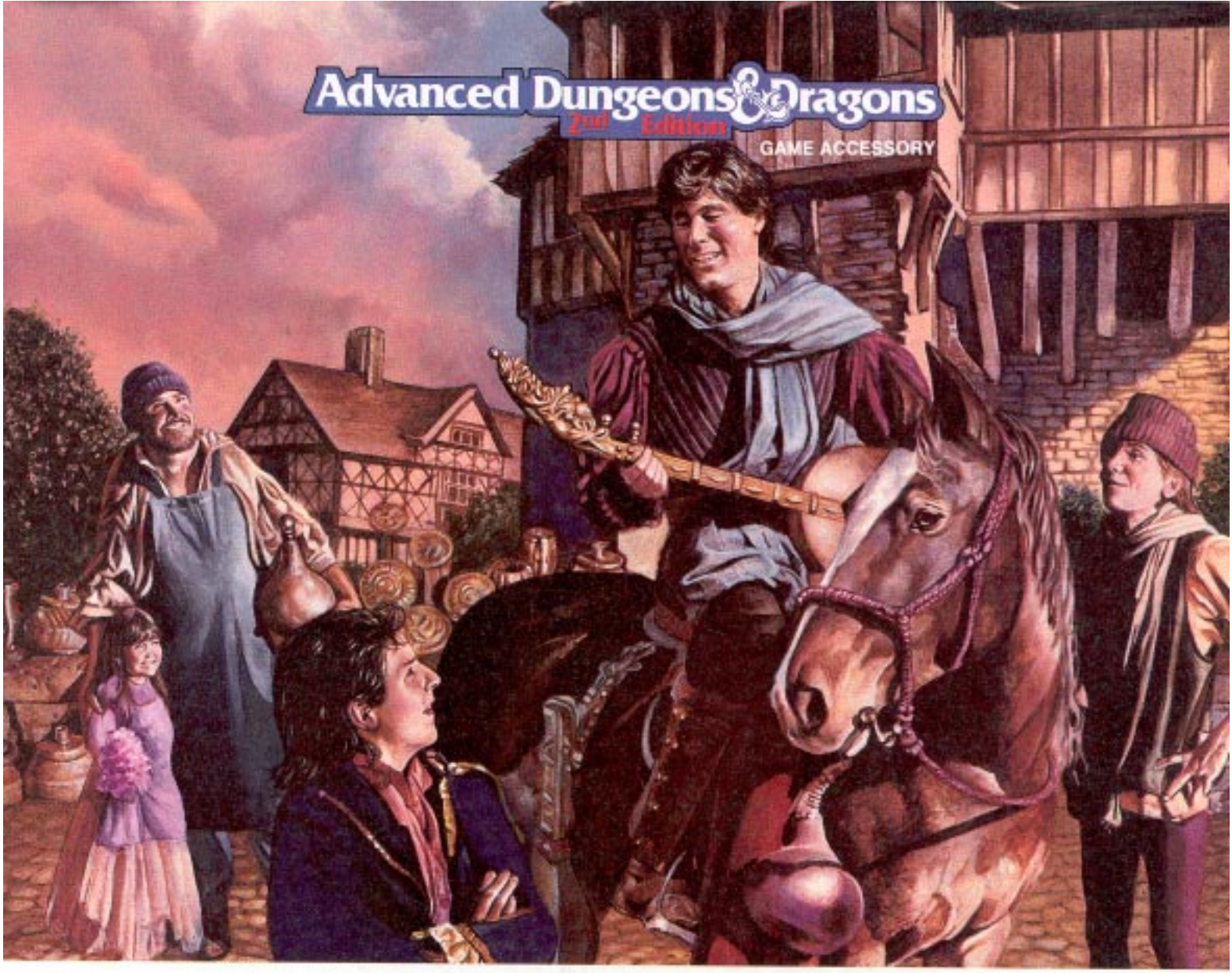
Ashes to Ashes, by Stewart Wieck. White Wolf, $10. This excellent first adventure for the quirky VAMPIRE* game packs a lot of punch into 80 pages, featuring a deadly struggle between the demonic Elders and Anarchs of Chicago that should keep even the most jaded role-players on the edge of their seats. Though the investigations are more successfully staged than the action scenes, and the finale is a bit underwhelming, Wieck maintains a suitably tense atmosphere throughout and serves up a gallery of the creepiest NPCs this side of Chaosium's CALL OF CTHULHU* game. Don't let the Ghoulie Man get you! Ω

* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

Moving Away?

If you have a subscription and plan to move soon, please let us know at least six weeks beforehand. If you live in the United States or Canada, send your old address, your new address, and your most recent mailing label to: Subscriptions Department, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. If you live in the United Kingdom, send the above information to: Subscriptions Department, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. The more quickly you let us know about your move, the easier it is for us to keep your subscription going. We might not be able to replace copies of the magazine that you miss!

DRAGON is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1990 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Our Newest Player Manual: The Complete Bard's Handbook

A wandering minstrel and rogue. Part legitimate performer, part con man, the Bard fills a special niche in the AD&D® game system.

The Complete Bard's Handbook reveals his tricks and secrets, expands his magical abilities, and unveils his mysterious lifestyle.

This 128-page handbook is TSR's newest addition to the great PHBR series of AD&D® game accessories. It is now on sale in book and hobby stores everywhere.



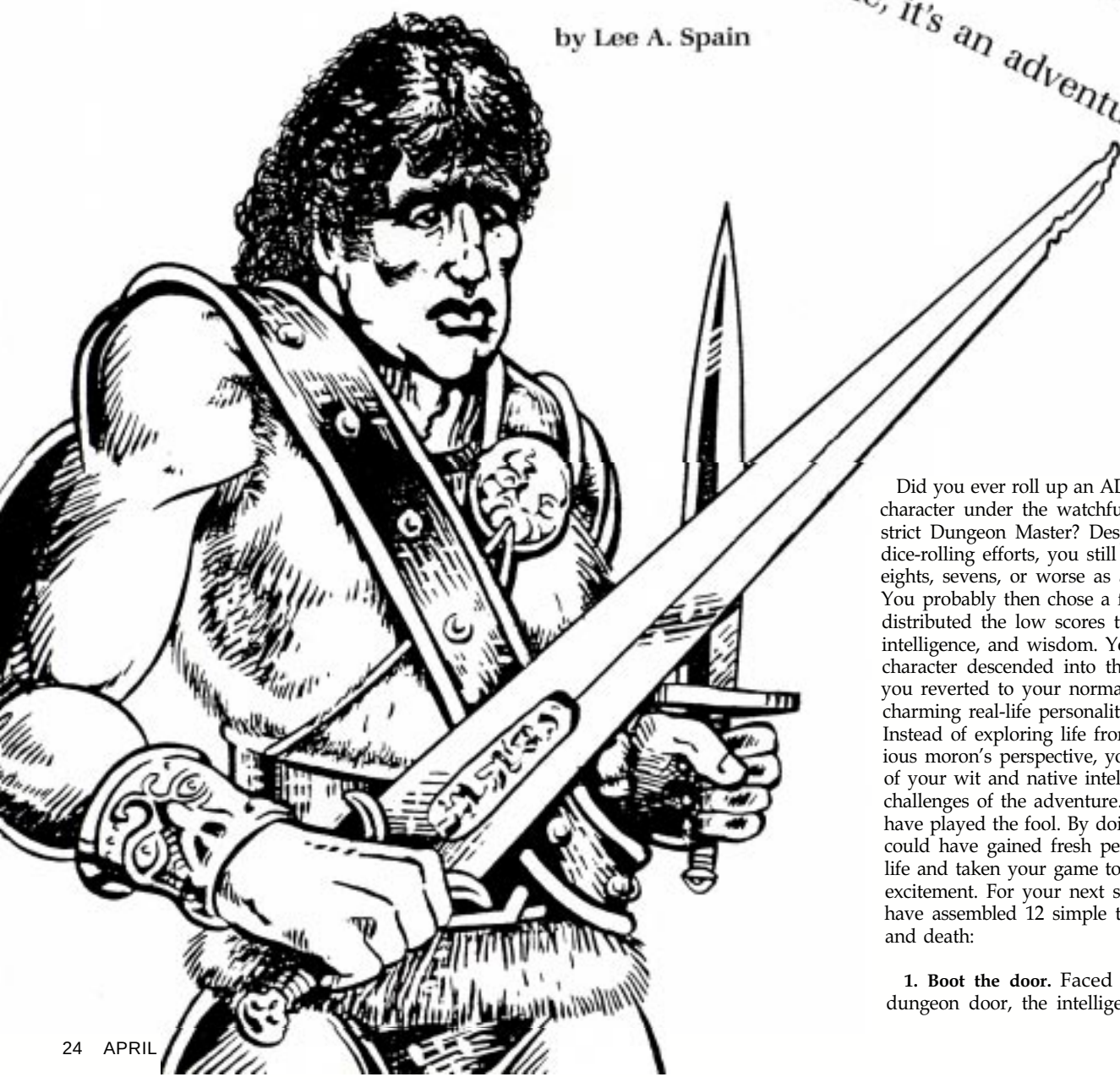
NEW FROM TSR!

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and AD&D are registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.
The TSR logo is a trademark owned by TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Your Basic Barbarian

Role-playing stupidity: It's not just a game, it's an adventure!

by Lee A. Spain



Did you ever roll up an AD&D® game character under the watchful eye of a strict Dungeon Master? Despite your best dice-rolling efforts, you still got stuck with eights, sevens, or worse as ability scores. You probably then chose a fighter and distributed the low scores to charisma, intelligence, and wisdom. Yet, when your character descended into the dungeon, you reverted to your normally witty and charming real-life personality, didn't you? Instead of exploring life from an obnoxious moron's perspective, you applied all of your wit and native intelligence to the challenges of the adventure. You should have played the fool. By doing so, you could have gained fresh perspectives on life and taken your game to new levels of excitement. For your next stupid fighter, I have assembled 12 simple tenets for life and death:

1. Boot the door. Faced with a dungeon door, the intelligent character

searches for traps, listens, and picks the lock. This is a waste of time. The moronic fighter-type strides boldly forward and boots the door with confidence and style. If your character should spring some horrible trap, savor the experience. It would never have happened to someone of your own real-life intellect.

"Whooaaa! This is bogus!" exclaimed Farfig Newton, the barbarian. Suspended 20' above a pit filled with scores of poisoned spikes, fire ants, and the skeletal remains of other stupid fighters, Farfig watched coins, magical hammers, and other prized possessions drain from his pack, and wistfully muttered, "Gotta get me some Velcro!"

2. Let the future take care of itself. The bold boot-the-door approach also applies to other aspects of a fighter's life. As a rule, the simple fighter never for a moment considers the future consequences of his actions. To do so is to lack faith in his own outstanding capabilities.

"No problem, dudes!" announced Newton to his comrades, while he was still suspended above the treacherous pit. "I've got this bodacious idea!"

Pulling his backup blade from a boot scabbard, Farfig did an amazing stomach crunch and dexterously reached for the rope that snared his left foot. With one swipe, he boldly freed himself. For a fraction of a moment, Newton savored his accomplishment.

Then, he discovered gravity.

3. Emulate the best of others. Many people think fighters are limited to hack-and-slash techniques. This is nonsense, as even a brute-force warrior is capable of studying a situation and applying the specialized techniques of other characters, even if in theory the warrior should not have the slightest talent for using those techniques.

Dominating the treasure chamber was a gigantic red dragon perched atop an immense hoard of spilled gold and gems. Summoning all their courage, the party rushed forward to do battle— except for one member. Remaining behind, Farfig the Fierce waved his hands in broad circular gestures and roared, "Kaza kaza hoolam aza wazza kazoo sazam!"

"Farfig! What are you doing?" shouted the party's distracted mage as the dragon attacked.

"Casting a spell, dude! That mondo *fireball* you threw yesterday looked easy enough."

A fighter can also emulate clerics, thieves, bards, rangers, etc. Your multi-talented warrior may not be able to turn undead, move silently in field plate armor, use music to quell a riot, or eat strange leaves and berries with safety, but he can make a courageous effort.

4. Leap to all conclusions. Of course, even a barbarian is able to analyze his actions and learn from his mistakes. However, it is highly likely that the barbarian will learn only the lessons he wants to learn.

"Farfig! Because of you, we lost three henchmen, two clerics, a wizard, and a thief when we attacked that red dragon! Do you have the faintest idea of what you did wrong?"

"Whoa, I think that's pretty obvious! A *fireball* is totally barfed out against a red dragon, but a lightning *bolt* would have been most excellent!"

5. Strength is authority. Intelligent and learned people are usually entrusted with leadership positions. But in a medieval world where might makes right, the moron myrmidon can assume leadership positions by virtue of superior strength. Given the chance to make party decisions, your fighter might want to make some changes. He might not want to take the point, and he might not want to absorb all the damage. He might even want to distribute wounds equally throughout the party. If your fighter tires of being the first through every door, he might toss the scrawny mage into the room first, then close the door. If the mage survives, it is probably safe to enter the room.

"Dudes, there sure was an awesome amount of thrashing around behind that door," observed Farfig in a rare contemplative moment, "but it's, like, all died down now, so I guess we can go in."

6. Improve the intellect. Wizards and clerics possess exceptional wisdom, and the fighter can always learn from his association with such learned people. The fighter should use every available moment to discuss burning philosophical questions with the cleric, and should try to learn at least simple spells and cantrips from the magician. Every fighter should have a conceptual idea about the workings of magic, and he should put the time that spell-casters normally use for resting or praying to better use, strengthening his own intellectual muscles.

Cracking open his most revered tome, Arias huddled in his robes by the dim fire's warmth and focused on memorizing his spells before the next battle.

"Let's see," the mage mumbled, his forehead creased by his intense concentration. "*Magic missile* — 'Extend the index finger toward your target and utter the phrase—' "

"YO, WIZ! WHATCHA READIN'?"

If your party's mage ever leaves his spell books or scrolls unattended, your fighter may even wish to borrow them for reading and personal study in his spare time. Remember, even if your fighter cannot read, he can always use extra books and scrolls for kindling or toilet paper.

7. Be wary of water. Every fool, even a fighter, knows that metallic armor sinks. Thus, you should never cross a body of water while so encumbered. If encountering an underground river, your fighter should insist on taking at least 16 rounds to properly remove every item of armor and weaponry before swimming across in his underclothing. During this time, the rest of the party should explore the dungeon corridors ahead.

Echoing down the dark dungeon corridors, the clash of swords and a cry of "Farfig! Help us!" reached the sturdy barbarian's ears. Clad in his underwear as he waded the 2'-deep stream, Farfig could only shake his head in regret and reply, "Oh, man, like, I am ready — *not!* Just party on, dudes!"

Every trained fighter with any intellectual skill at all knows that water can cause leather to rot and iron to rust. Thus, after swimming, he should dry his belongings, meticulously oil his weapons, and take at least 16 more rounds to dress for battle.

Screams, explosive spells, and the ring of swordplay continued down the corridor. Again, our hero heard the call, "Farfig, for the love of the gods, help us! We're getting killed!"

Carefully oiling and sharpening his long sword, our hero sighed and called back, "Hey, take a chill pill and cool out until I get my board waxed, you know?"

While your character prepares, the rest of your party should have ample time to clear the dungeon of remaining challenges. By the time your fighter is ready, the area should be perfectly safe.

Stomping at last into the silent, blood-filled room, Farfig offered his services with a hearty, "It's time to shake some catsup on the monster-burgers, dudes!"

Please note that many perfectly intelligent and exceptionally wise fighters have also used the aforementioned ploy to survive underground.

8. Share your knowledge. Honesty is critical to all adventurers. If you know something really important, you should share that knowledge with everyone. If the surviving members of your party had the wit to hide the dragon's gold in Old Man Batson's grave, let the whole town know. Everyone will be

impressed with both their cleverness and your forthrightness.

In the same vein, while prudent people may refrain from talking religion or politics in general company, your fighter may wish to engage in theological debate to spread his knowledge of religion and establish your own party's credentials.

"Yo, Mister Evil High Priest! My man here, Brother Thalmus the Acolyte, told me that your religious order is greedy, corrupt, and just flaming stooopid! He says that there is only one true way and that's the way of his church, the one you're always picking on, and he's not scared of any of your antipaladins in Spandex plate mail!"

9. Drive a hard bargain. Everyone knows the old adage that a fool and his money are soon parted. However, no one ever asks how the fool feels about this situation. It hurts—just ask any moronic fighter. While he may be a sensitive guy, your armed and dangerous fool soon learns to be aggressive in business situations. He must always try to get the best deal—and if he cannot use reason, other tactics will do.

"Hey, like, how much for a bow, a quiver, and about twenty of those flight-type arrows?" asked Farfig Newton at the local bazaar.

"That would be twenty royal," replied the earnest fletcher.

"Whoa," Farfig said thoughtfully, toying with his sword hilt. "I'm not usually mental or anything, but I used up all but six royals getting Brother Thalmus into Greyhawk Memorials E.R., then I got fined for fighting with a whole priesthood and killing twenty of them, and I still gotta woof down something for lunch. I can give you one royal, if that's butch with you:

The fletcher eyed the barbarian's enormous arm muscles as the latter's fingers began to tighten on the blade's hilt. "I suppose you want it gift wrapped," he said with an unhappy sigh.

10. Don't limit your skills. Your fighter's dinosaur-grade mind may be his greatest source of frustration and anger. This has, perhaps, driven him to resolve all of his predicaments in a physical manner, using weapons, which has probably gone a long way to making him feel more powerful and in control of his life. Throughout his adventures, your fighter will undoubtedly find new weapons and will try to use them immediately. The party may be particularly concerned when your fighter comes across items such as the lance, sling, morning star, flail, arquebus, crossbow, arbalest, ballista, or siege engine—but fighters fight, right?

"It's called a bola," Farfig explained proudly. "I got it at the bazaar. I grab one stone like this and swing the other two around my head like this, and—whoa, hey, bogus move on my part, Garth! Want me to flag down an oxcart to Greyhawk Memorial?"

11. Wish for yourself. You are the strongest member of the party, and you have the right to think independently. If you get an actual magical *wish,* from a ring or anywhere else, don't be pressured into fulfilling someone else's plans. Ask for something that any true-blooded fighter would want, without concerning yourself with how the DM will interpret or twist your request:

"Oh, wow, like, I wish we were neck-deep in the most bodacious dragon hoard in all existence!"

Finally, don't waste time arguing with other characters about syntax and sentence structure. Life is too short. Just make the *wish* and enjoy the results.

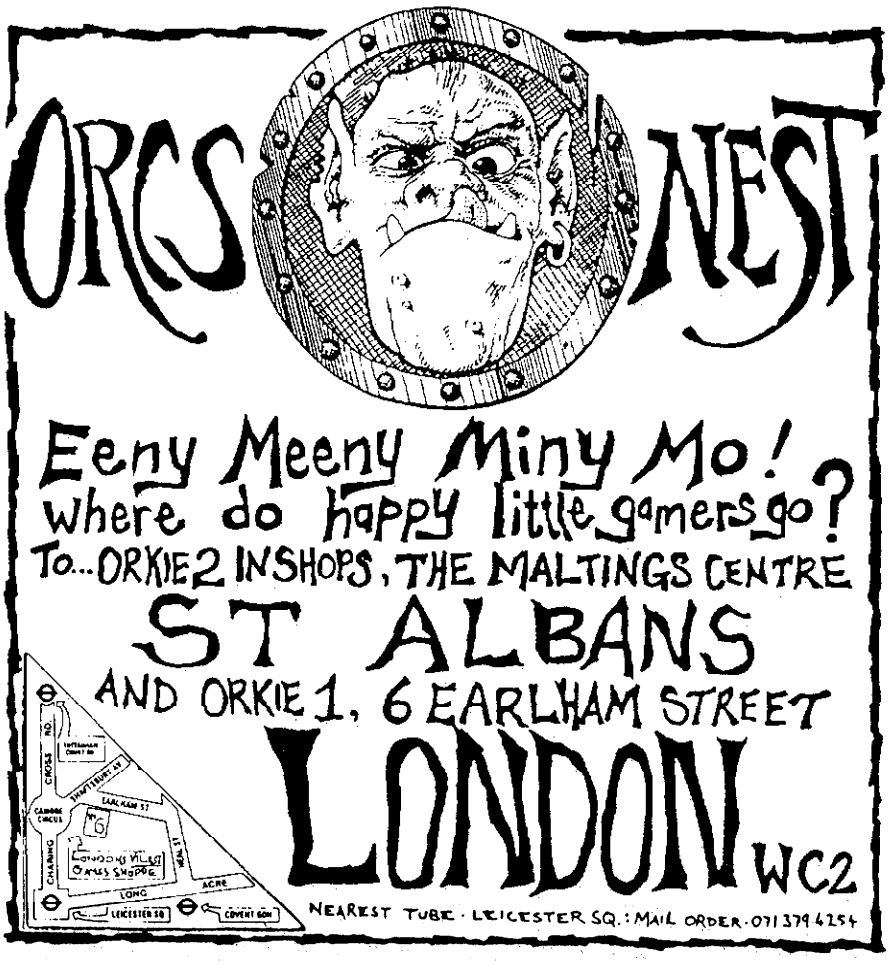
"Man, forget the treasure—I just wish my buddies and I had another opportunity to defeat that red dragon:

12. Never let your DM forget. By following these simple guidelines, you don't have to cringe at the prospect of playing another stupid fighter. You alone can be the life (and death) of the party. Make sure your DM knows how much you enjoy role-playing your barbarian.

There is one more thing to remember. When creating your next character, smile and ask your DM the following question: "Are you sure I can't reroll some of these scores?"

Ω



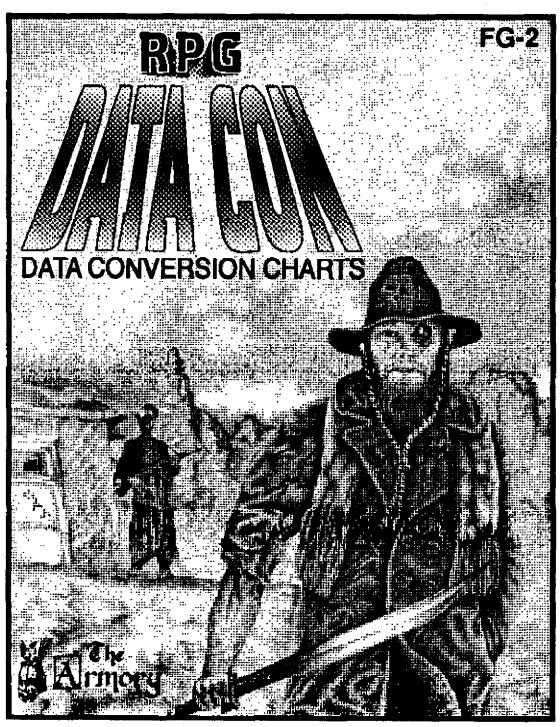




The Armory

4145 AMOS AVENUE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21215

THE FINEST IN GAMING AND HOBBY ACCESSORIES!



$10.95 Retail

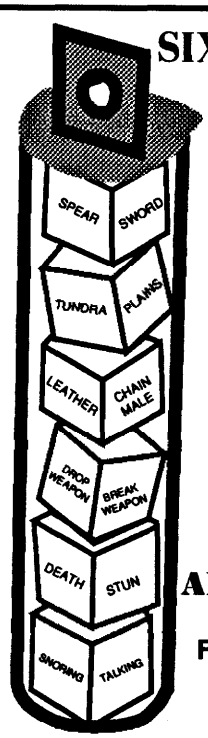
RPG DATA CON
DATA CONVERSION CHARTS

Now you can convert all of your favorite PC's from one game system to another!

Convert from one "genre" to another with this easy to use Fantasy Role-Playing Accessory.

Role-Playing will never be the same!

SIX NEW SPECIALTY GAMING DICE



DIE-11	TERRAIN DIE	$1.00 Each Retail
DIE-12	WEAPON DIE	
DIE-13	ARMOR DIE	
DIE-14	FUMBLE DIE	
DIE-15	HEAR NOISE DIE	
DIE-16	CRITICAL DIE	
DIE-TB3	TUBE WITH ALL SIX DICE	$5.95 Retail



ALSO TRY OUR OTHER SPECIALTY DICE

ALIGNMENT • HIT LOCATION • MONSTER • FRIEND & FOE • TRAPS • ENCOUNTER REACTION • ATTACKING • QUALITY • CHARACTER CLASS • CHARACTER RACE • CREATURE SIZE

(800) NOW-GAME • (410) 764-8100

ARMORY SPONSORS

AK	ANCHORAGE	HOBBYCRAFT INC.	349-5815
CA	CITRUS HEIGHTS	GATEWAY COMICS & GAMES	726-8776
CA	COLTON	EAGLE HOBBIES	825-9706
CA	DIAMOND BAR	ALL-STAR GAMES	598-5098
CA	FULLERTON	THE GAME CASTLE	871-5800
CA	GARDEN GROVE	BROOKHURST HOBBIES	636-3580
CA	MERCED	HOBBY CASTLE	723-6662
CA	SAN DIEGO	GAMETOWNE	291-1666
CA	SONOMA	THE REALM	938-5130
CA	YORBA LINDA	THE PORTAL	777-3340
CD	EDMONTON-ALBERTA	ADVENTURE SUPPLY LTD.	483-4263
CT	GREENWICH	THE DRAGON'S DEN	622-1171
CT	MIDDLETOWN	GAMES & STUFF	344-8895
CT	WEST HARTFORD	WAR & PIECES	232-0608
CO	DENVER	BONNIE BRAE HOBBIES	733-5879
DE	CLAYMONT	BETWEEN BOOKS	798-3378
FL	FT. LAUDERDALE	COMIC & GAMING EXCHANGE	742-0777
FL	FT. LAUDERDALE	DRAGON'S LAIR GAME	587-3347
FL	JACKSONVILLE	XENO'S	777-9366
FL	LAKELAND	FANTASY FACTORY	646-3813
FL	MIAMI	SUNSHINE COMICS & GAMES	264-1250
FL	ORLANDO	ENTERPRISE 1701	896-1704
FL	TAMPA	SUNCOAST HOBBY & GAME	935-4263
IL	CARBONDALE	CASTLE PERILOUS	529-5317
IL	MOLINE	THE GAME EMPORIUM	762-5577
IL	MT. PROSPECT	GAMES PLUS	577-9656
IL	ZION	K & K MINIATURES AND GAMES	249-1717
IN	FT. WAYNE	WIZARDS KEEP	436-5168
IN	INDIANAPOLIS	GAME PRESERVE	571-9110
ME	BATH	TOY SOLDIER	443-3711
ME	ROCKLAND	ADVENTURERS GUILD	594-5035
MA	BOSTON	COMPLEAT STRATEGIST	267-2451
MA	CAMBRIDGE	PANDAMONIUM GAMES,VIDEO,BOOKS	547-3721
MA	MALDEN	EXCALIBUR HOBBIES	322-2959
MA	WORCESTER	MUSIC QUEST	754-9597
MD	BELAIR	STRATEGIC CASTLE	638-2400
MD	BALTIMORE	ARMORY MUSEUM/MILITARY HIST.	764-8100
MD	WALDORF	SMALLWOOD VIDEO CENTER	645-1981
MI	LANSING	RIDER'S HOBBY SHOP	485-3024
MN	MINNEAPOLIS	PHOENIX GAMES	823-3222
MN	MINNEAPOLIS	THE SOURCE COMICS & GAMES	623-3049
MN	ROSEVILLE	SOURCE	486-8339
MN	ST. PAUL	THE SOURCE COMICS & GAMES	646-7870
MO	OVERLAND	GAMES, CRAFTS & HOBBIES	423-2199
MO	ST. LOUIS	HOBBY SHOP	351-4818
MS	STARKVILLE	GUN DOG COMICS	800-332-7601
MT	MISSOULA	TREASURE CHEST	549-7992
NC	CHARLOTTE	DRAGONS NEST, INC.	596-9465
NH	CONCORD	TOY CITY	225-9379
NH	DOVER	PAPERBACK BAZZAAR TRI-STATE PLAZA	742-2626
NH	MANCHESTER	THE COMIC STORE	668-6705
NH	NASHUA	THE COMIC STORE	881-4855
NJ	CRANBURY	THE GAMER'S REALM	426-9339
NJ	PARAMUS	GAME MASTER LTD.	843-3308
NY	ALBANY	FANTACO ENT. INC.	463-1400
NY	BROOKLYN	WALTS	745-4991
NY	NEW YORK	COMPLEAT STRATEGIST #1	685-3880
NY	NEW YORK	COMPLEAT STRATEGIST #2	582-1272
NY	NEW YORK	COMPL. STRAT. #3 ROCK. CENTER	265-7449
NY	PLATTSBURG	GAMESMASTER	561-5033
NY	ROCHESTER	CRAZY EGOR	427-2190
NY	SCHENECTADY	ARMADILLO GAMES	377-6134
NY	YONKERS	THE DRAGON'S DEN	793-4630
OH	COLUMBUS	THE DROWSY DRAGON	231-8534
PA	JENKINTOWN	JENKINTOWN HOBBY	884-7555
PA	KING OF PRUSSIA	COMPLEAT STRATEGIST	265-8562
PA	PHILADELPHIA	COMPLEAT STRATEGIST	563-2960
SC	N. CHARLESTON	GREEN DRAGON	797-2052
SC	WEST COLUMBIA	COMIC SHOPPE	926-7243
TN	MEMPHIS	MEMPHIS HOBBIES & GAMES	323-3006
TX	MESQUITE	GAMES PLUS	681-8506
TN	NASHVILLE	GAMES EXTRAORDINAIRE	800-777-GAME
TX	AUSTIN	THE DRAGONS LAIR	454-2399
TX	COMMERCE	CAVALIER	866-8530
TX	LUBBOCK	STAR BOOKS & COMICS	744-9150
TX	SAN ANTONIO	DUNGEON BOOK & COMIC	732-2272
VA	ALEXANDRIA	EAGLE & EMPIRE GAME SHOP	360-5363
VA	FALLS CHURCH	COMPLEAT STRATEGIST	532-2477
VA	NORFOLK	CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS	583-9451
VA	RICHMOND	ONE-EYED JACQUES	359-5163
VA	STERLING PARK	WARGAMER'S HOBBY SHOP	450-6738
VT	BURLINGTON	QUARTERSTAFF GAMES	863-3666
WA	LYNWOOD	FANTASTIC GAMES & TOYS	775-4871
WA	SEATTLE	GARY'S GAMES	800-327-4292

ARMORY OVERSEAS

CD - MONTREAL	ARMORY CANADA-LAVENIER INT.	(514)341-1561
FR - PARIS	THE ARMORY/L'OEUF CUBE	587-2883
FRD - MANHEIM	THE ARMORY/FANTASY FORREST	137-2574
IT - VERONA	THE ARMORY/I GIOCH: DEI GRANDE	045-8000319
SWE - VANERSBORG	THE ARMORY WIZARDS GAMES	521-17045
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE - LEISURE CRAFT		545-3995

For a complete catalog of all Armory Dice, Paint, Brushes, and gaming accessories see any of the fine dealers listed in this advertisement or send $5.00 to The Armory Museum 4145 Amos Ave. Baltimore, Md. 21215



Hot Night in the Old Town

AD&D® "hometown" adventures for priest characters

by Joseph R. Ravitts

Artwork by Scott Rosema

As long as role-playing games have existed, there has been an understandable tendency to skip over those periods of game-world time between player characters' expeditions. After all, if a wounded fighter lacks access to any means of immediate healing and so must sit around town recuperating for weeks, why not just jump ahead to a time when he's back up to full hit points? Or if a mage is constructing some enchanted device for himself, why not just jump ahead to the adventure in which he first gets to use it?

Yet there *are* interesting things that can happen in one fixed location. A fair amount of plot action in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* took place right in the Shire, before Frodo ever traveled abroad and right after he returned. The first two books of Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast trilogy are set entirely in or near one gigantic castle. I believe that there is more that can be done with "adventures between the adventures," those events befalling the home-base communities of the player characters. Accordingly, I have devised a random-occurrence table, somewhat like random encounter tables.

My thinking in this area was stimulated by the fact that the AD&D® 2nd Edition game, in reworking the priest class, has made more allowances for that class's genuinely religious activities as opposed to mere club-the-foe-and-heal-the-friend adventuring. Much could be made of temple-related events, I realized—just as, in many kung-fu movies, a lot of the action takes place inside Shaolin Temple. Thus, my selection of "hometown" scenarios revolves around a hypothetical priest-class player character, establishing or serving at a temple in his city or town of residence. There is, of course, no reason why PCs of other classes can't be involved in the situations as well.

Each of these selections amounts only to a brief suggestion for events; details must still come from the DM's mind. But with

just three die rolls—a four-sider, a six-sider, and another four-sider—the DM's imagination can be fueled. It is possible to roll up more than one event and see what can be made of the combination.

To use the tables below, roll 1d4 to determine the broad category of adventure (Home & Temple, Neighbors & Community, Internal Danger, External Danger). Next, roll 1d6 to ascertain the type of adventure seed. Then roll 1d4 to determine the specific event. Or, just read through the list and pick an event that would fit well into your campaign.

1. Home & Temple

1. Religious issues

1. A rival religion is trying to drive out the PC's own. If the DM knows his players enjoy metaphysical discussions and are mature enough not to get belligerent about them, the resulting play can include acting out plausible debates between priestly competitors. Otherwise, the situation can instead be defined more in simple harassment or fighting terms at whatever level of intensity suits the experience level of the characters concerned.

2. NPC swindlers, not belonging to any clerical class, are impersonating priests. For example, a diviner specialist mage and an illusionist might feel themselves too weak to risk wilderness and dungeon adventures—but, working together, could use their spells (possibly supplemented by a few magical items such as curative potions) to simulate clerical powers. People ignorant enough to be fooled by them could be induced to make contributions for a glorious temple that would never actually be built. This fraud might be perpetrated out of mere greed—or perhaps out of a malicious desire to leave the public thinking that the PC priests are just like the swindlers.

3. The priest's deity commands him to prophesy to the community in some fashion. This may entail simply reciting a message verbatim; or something more unusual—as when, in the Old Testament, the prophet Ezekiel was commanded to perform a sort of street-mime warning of judgment. Crowd response to the message could be handled similarly to NPC reactions in regular adventuring encounters.

4. The priest must carry out a fast or some other self-denial. A major restriction, such as not speaking for a month, could hamper the character's actions even in a stay-at-home scenario, but a lesser self-denial, such as having to give away all silver coins acquired, would add color to character interactions without the player who plays the cleric being left unable to do anything.

2. Crime & politics

1. Thieves burglarize the temple or the priest's residence, or attempt to extort protection money. (If the PC priest has only just begun serving locally, it could be his predecessor who has been suffering this trouble.)

2. A national or local government undertakes to confiscate the temple's property, tax its income, censor the sermons, or otherwise tie the hands of religion. PCs associated with the priest might have a hand in uncovering which lord or official is responsible for the interference.

3. Competing secular factions try to win the support of the priest's religion. There may be a clear moral reason why the temple should favor one side over the other, or it may be a right-and-wrong-on-both-sides case, with the priest wishing to avoid all involvement except as an impartial peacemaker.

4. Fugitives of some sort (whether fleeing from the local authorities or from a foreign country) seek sanctuary at the temple. Their arrival may be public or secret; they may be innocent or guilty; they may even belong to some nonhuman race whose very presence causes difficulties for the priest.

3. Temple administration

1. Building, repairing, or enlarging a temple can give rise to many dramatic (or comical) situations. Suppose, for instance, the priest character befriended a storm giant while adventuring abroad, and the giant decides to return a kindness by coming to town to help in the work; he could unintentionally put quite a scare into unprepared citizens.

2. The priest has to make preparations for the visit of an overbearing, demanding superior. This "grand inquisitor" may or may not be someone the PC has met before. As with the rival-religion scenario, this situation can accommodate profound theological discussions if the DM judges that his living, breathing players can enjoy this without animosity.

3. The character seeks to recruit nonclerical personnel for supplementary purposes, such as a bard to serve as a director of music for worship services. Both clergy and laity might oppose the priest's hiring choices for various reasons.

4. Offerings made to the temple turn out to include stolen, cursed, or otherwise embarrassing treasures. (Imagine an Orthodox Jewish synagogue receiving a donation of canned hams!) The priest would have considerable trouble disposing of unacceptable items tactfully—and avoiding a frame-up in the case of stolen treasures.

4. Pilgrims and worshipers

1. The priest must train an unruly or slow-learning disciple. The disciple may have been forced into this novitiate by zealous parents when the disciple really wants to be, for example, an alchemist. Or, if joining up voluntarily, the disciple may have had inappropriate motives, especially if the priest or priestess is attractive and is not bound to celibacy.

2. A pilgrim arrives with some quest or mission to fulfill. It could be a paladin, carrying out an *atonement* for some compromise of paladinhood; an unwilling lycanthrope seeking to be cured; a descendant of some past chief priest of the temple; or a pious adventurer, bringing to the temple some relic or treasure stolen from there long ago (with priest and pilgrim both unaware that thieves are still on the item's trail).

3. A rich, prominent, and obnoxious person, who is either a local congregation member or a periodic pilgrim, annoys everyone by constantly demanding special treatment. Such a person would think nothing of claiming the last available ***cure*** disease spell just to be rid of a sore throat, though some sick peasant child were at the verge of death before his eyes.

4. Some seemingly ordinary newcomer to the temple is suddenly revealed to be a secret messenger from the priest's deity. This NPC should, if possible, appear peripherally in two or three game episodes prior to the one in which his secret identity is dramatically uncovered. The ensuing message could be the springboard for the next out-of-town expedition in which the priest character will participate.

5. Household affairs

1. The priest is seeking a spouse—or, if already married or celibate, is seeking a spouse for a relative.

2. A family member turns bad, taking up immoral ways (possibly gambling with money stolen from the priest). This troublemaker could easily do great damage to the priest's reputation in the community until he repents.

3. Someone in the household, whether family member or servant, undergoes a supernatural transformation or displacement (possessed by a fiend, changed into an undead monster, kidnapped and replaced by a doppelganger, etc.).

4. A series of bizarre accidents befalling family members leads the priest to discover that a long-forgotten ancestral curse has been "reactivated."

6. Extraordinary surprises

1. Some part of the temple site is found to conceal the entrance to a dungeon, its existence long unsuspected.

2. As above, only the secret entrance leads to another world or plane.

3. Some natural disaster or accident destroys the temple or priest's residence.

4. The priest's religion is itself disrupted, such as by the deity's very identity proving to be different than was supposed.

2. Neighbors & Community

1. Spiritual needs

1. General attempts to convert wrongdoers are always potential role-playing material. The ones to be converted may be of any intelligent race. Their sins need not

have any bearing on adventures in the usual sense, but a trivial fault in a trivial NPC might have relevance not apparent at first. Say, for example, that some halfling has been stealing writing supplies from a local scribe. A trifle—until, confronted by the priest, the halfling confesses that he had been forced into stealing these things for an outlawed evil spell-caster who needs them to prepare scrolls of spells.

2. The priest wants to resurrect a dead citizen whose services the community particularly needs; but someone else, such as a money-grubbing heir, interferes with this.

3. A rash of possessions or curse-effects plagues the community, perhaps from some evil artifact passing from hand to hand. New victims are affected faster than the priest can help them, leaving the players to devise emergency measures until the root problem is solved.

4. Some former adherent of the priest's religion is now bitterly denouncing the faith to everyone who will listen, and this person will cry "Persecution!" if the priest tries (however gently) to answer the accusations. It may develop that an older priest, to whose post the PC priest succeeded, was responsible for alienating the embittered character.

2. Emotional needs

1. The priest tries to council a depressed person. It should be easy to plant the psychological theme in a fantasy context; for instance, the counseled one could be a female dwarf, despondent because she can't grow any facial hair.

2. Intoxicant addictions can similarly be translated into the social life of a game-world. The things people or creatures could be addicted to are numberless. The DM permitting, the priest might invent a new clerical magical item for the specific purpose of curing chemical dependencies.

3. The priest is called on to mediate quarrels between neighbors, or between a husband and wife.

4. Some NPC makes a confession (perhaps a dying confession) to the priest, of such a nature that the priest faces a moral dilemma over whether to take some action upon his new knowledge. For example, a wizard who routinely travels abroad for long periods of time has a wife who's fallen in love with another man while her husbands away; she confides this to the priest, who must decide what, if anything, to do about it.

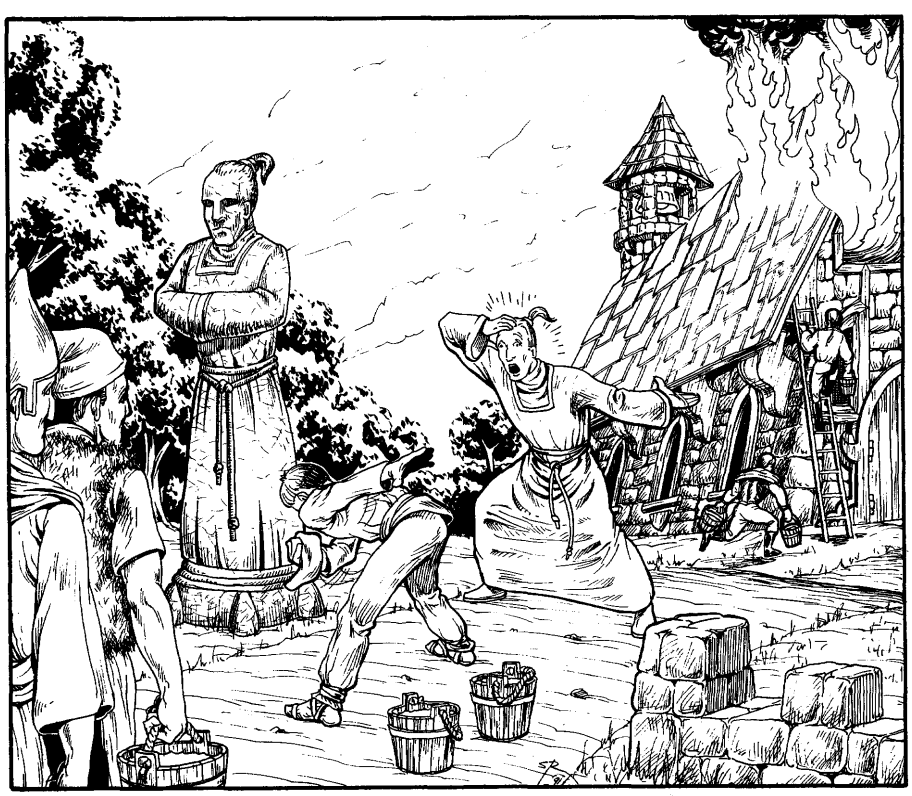
3. Physical needs

1. The priest attempts to raise funds for some charitable purpose, such as sheltering the homeless. If religious frauds have previously occurred in the community, the priest may have to go to great lengths to prove his honesty.

2. Some petrification-using monster has just been destroyed, leaving numerous petrified people in its wake. With a current shortage of the means to restore these victims, buck-passing officials foist on the priest the job of preserving the statues until they can be un-stoned.

3. An abandoned infant, human or otherwise, is left on the temple's doorstep, perhaps without clues to its parentage.

4. A businessman friendly with the priest suffers a setback due to lack of specialized labor; the priest tries to help him find new help with the requisite talents.



4. Righting wrongs

1. The priest uncovers criminals running a slave trade—or, if slavery is legal in the campaign setting, decides that he is duty-bound to abolish it.

2. Nonhuman neighbors of the priest are victims of racial hostility (as in the TV series, Alien Nation). Any nonhuman PCs associated with the priest should be interested in helping to set this right.

3. The priest must try to talk his country's ruler out of waging a war of aggression—or, perhaps must speak up against cowardice when fighting is justified.

4. Some neighbor or follower of the priest is arrested and jailed for a crime he didn't commit. The priest's efforts to amend this injustice may entail exposing a corrupt judge who accepted a bribe from the real criminal.

5. Fighting crime

1. The priest finds plenty of use for *detect lie* and *detect magic* spells in the course of unmasking various frauds in the marketplace.

2. A sadistic husband is regularly beating up his wife and children. If the game-world has the same standards as most real-world medieval societies, the priest will get no help from any authorities in trying to stop this.

3. A neighbor is threatened with murder or with the kidnapping of loved ones.

4. The priest becomes involved in trying to prevent a duel or trying to prevent the offending party from winning by treachery, such as using a magical sword when the other guy has only a normal one.

6. Extraordinary neighbors

1. The priest is convinced, possibly by divine revelation, that the son of a couple in his congregation is destined for a career as a cleric or a paladin—but the youngster resists the idea.

2. A neighbor, on whom the priest has never felt the need to direct a detect evil spell, is actually a disguised evil monster.

3. Another neighbor (on the other side of the street from the above one?) proves to be a disguised benign monster, perhaps a gold or silver dragon, with some reason to hide out.

4. Some seemingly unimportant individual turns out to be no less than the ruler of a foreign country (fleeing from assassins, suffering from amnesia, etc.).

3. Internal Danger

1. Epidemics

1. Disease spreads among humans. For details on plague effects, see "The End of the World," in DRAGON® issue #138.

2. Disease spreads among demihumans.

3. Disease spreads among all intelligent beings.

4. Disease spreads among domestic animals.

animals.

2. Street crime

1. Shopowners are robbed and extorted.
2. Random murders indicate the possible work of wererats, jackalweres, or similar monsters.
3. Vandalism and arson suddenly increase in the community, resulting from racial or religious bigotry.
4. Street gangs, possibly of different species, battle each other for turf or control of criminal business.

3. Organized crime

1. Criminals infiltrate city government.
2. Criminals infiltrate craft guilds, perhaps first discovered by the priest when he tries to hire artisans for temple repairs.
3. Criminals try to gain power over all temples, pretending to offer each one support against its rivals.
4. Major gang wars erupt. The priest's first involvement with this situation could arise from having to dispel some undead monsters that ran loose after being used by one side or the other in the strife.

4. Accidents and disasters

1. The recently slain corpses of several types of poisonous monsters (black and green dragons, giant scorpions, etc.) cause contamination of a vital water supply.
2. Large buildings with unsafe construction, long held up by magic, collapse when the magic fails (remember the *Monty Python's Flying Circus* TV sketch about apartments raised by hypnosis?). The priest will naturally do all he can to help the casualties, but this might not prevent his being affected by an unthinking public backlash against all spell-casters.
3. An earthquake or volcanic eruption devastates the city. (If that's not supernatural enough, there can always be some buried relic, lich's tomb, etc., unearthed by the disaster.)
4. A magical storm, originally conjured by someone far away with no intention of affecting the priest's hometown, does chance to come there and cause damage. The timing and the nature of the damage might cause the priest's flock to think they've somehow incurred their deity's anger.

5. Magic out of hand

1. A standard NPC evil mage from the DM's files, residing in or near the city, conceives a grudge against the priest.
2. A local nonevil mage, in the course of trying to create a major magical item, causes unpredictable effects to the populace (everyone on a street being levitated, for instance, or some persons becoming years younger or older).
3. An incompetent teacher at a school for mages causes mishaps to local students. A student learning conjuration spells, for instance, might attempt in the laboratory to summon a low-level monster—but, because of a slight error in procedure caused by poor instruction, would instead materialize the local lord or mayor, snatched dripping from his bath. The priest character's involvement would begin with calming the outrage of the conjured dignitary, then would extend to trying to convince the bumbling teacher that he needs more lessons himself.
4. In another case calling for the priest's talents at mediating disputes, some routine use of magic in the community is adversely affecting certain local residents. *Continual light* spells, for instance, would be a nuisance to beings of a light-sensitive race dwelling near the work site. An enterprise entailing repeated use of air elementals might infuriate a neighborhood sage, as winds pouring in his window scattered his parchments.

6. Upsets in local government

1. The local ruler dies or abdicates. Rival heirs or successors fight for his post, and the priest's own congregation is perilously divided in loyalties.
2. Relationships change suddenly between the municipal authorities and some guild or mercantile association. An armorers' guild, for instance, might demand a sharp increase in fees to equip the city guards. This could again be a case where the priest would act as a moderator. Perhaps something more melodramatic is afoot, with the priest uncovering some hidden villain who is profiting by the crisis.
3. During a temporary absence of the local ruler, news comes to the priest of an impending coup attempt by underlings. The priest and associated PCs must decide between slipping out to alert the ruler, combatting the coup themselves, or joining in the coup if they feel the ruler deserves to be deposed.
4. A curse of the DM's choice befalls the local ruler or some member of his family.

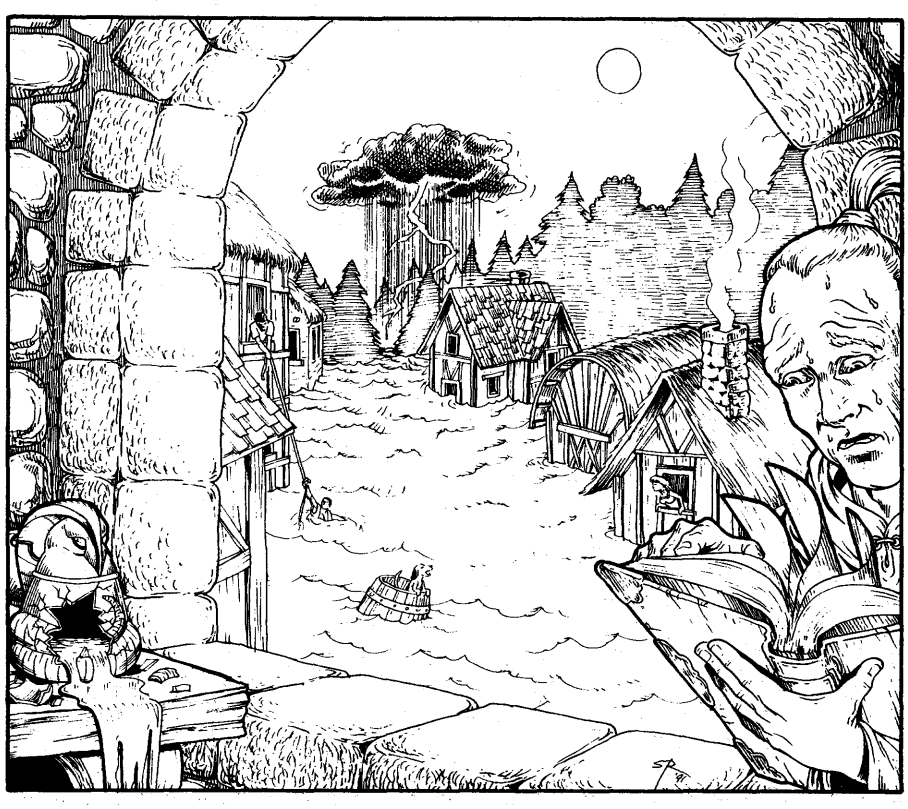
4. External Danger

1. Disasters

1. A broad area including or adjoining the priest's hometown is stricken by floods. These may be of natural or magical origin (for example, something opened a doorway to the elemental plane of Water at a point uphill of inhabited land).
2. A large-scale famine could again have supernatural causes, such as some major evil being that causes a whole circle of druids to go insane, who then devastate the farmlands.
3. Massive tectonic and volcanic upheavals change the entire geography of neighboring regions, making some areas uninhabitable. The priest must shame his cold-hearted neighbors into helping the victims who come to town seeking aid.
4. The climate changes radically. This would be bad enough, but the secondary consequences could be nearly as bad. An extended winter, for instance, would facilitate an invasion by frost giants or other cold-dwelling monsters.

2. Trouble with national government

1. The priest receives a vision warning that the current monarch is about to be supplanted by someone horribly evil. The DM can decide whether this accession is preventable, and the PCs must decide whether to try to mobilize their community against the coming tyrant.



2. The national government comes under the influence of a religion hostile to that of the PC priest, and the priest finds officials trying to tell him and his flock that they must forsake their deity for the other.

3. Rabble-rousers, possibly using *mass hypnosis*, are stirring unjustified public ill-will against a virtuous monarch or some other good-aligned person of national importance.

4. The priest's hometown and temple are visited by an unpopular member of the royal family, harm to whom would be blamed on the community.

3. Threats to commerce

1. Pirates or bandits are increasingly preying on trade moving to and from the priest's community. The priest has clues that the criminals have an agent in town.

2. Some resource vital to the national or local economy fails. Metal ores are exhausted, an exportable crop is blighted, etc.

3. Workers indispensable to commerce, like sailors, begin to mutiny, strike, or desert.

4. The priest's hometown suffers an economic depression because of gains made in trade competition by a rival community. Riots may ensue.

4. Military invasion

1. Another city (possibly the rival from the previous scenario) acts on its own to attack the priest's city.

2. The priest's city is attacked by foreigners as part of a general invasion of the country. The capital has not yet been assaulted.

3. The capital has been devastated in a massive sneak attack, then occupied with the aid of powerful magic. The first hint the priest and his neighbors get of this is when they find themselves besieged.

4. Warlike foreigners, not immediately attacking the priest's native country, are trying to entice or intimidate it into helping their country to attack a third country.

5. Otherworldly invasion

1. Fiends or other evil extraplanar beings achieve entry into the world for standard purposes of killing, torturing, enslaving, etc.

2. The extraplanar beings are after a particular object, owned by or known to the priest.

3. The beings want to kill or capture a specific person, possibly the priest or a regular PC comrade of his.

4. Extraplanar beings are only passing through the area for some reason, intending no harm—unless provoked.

6. Monster migration

1. Orcs, trolls, or other humanoid monsters begin immigrating uninvited, claiming to have peaceful intentions. (And if you believe that one . . .)

2. Nonhumanoid intelligent monsters turn up and insist that, by some treaty dating back for millennia, some of the city's real estate rightfully belongs to them. (The priest might help negotiations by using the *tongues* spell.)

3. Nonintelligent monsters move into the area. If the DM rules that they do not pose a major danger to the whole community, the priest may find himself trying to dissuade the aristocracy from endangering commoners' lives needlessly in the staging of grand monster hunts.

4. The priest's home could be invaded by comparatively normal animals—like dinosaurs. Ω

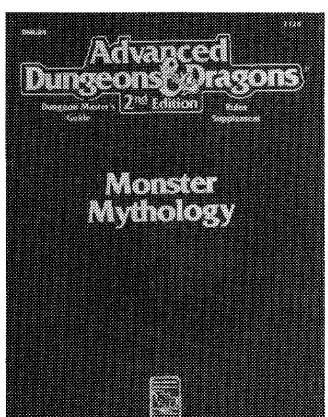
Resubscribe!

Check your mailing label. If it's time to resubscribe, fill out the reply card inside this magazine, or write your name and address on a sheet of paper, then send it along with your payment to:

DRAGON® Magazine
P.O. Box 5695
Boston MA 02206

DRAGON is a registered trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1991 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Monster Mythology
TSR2128
Regularly $15.00
***Now only* . . . . . $13.49 !**
Available May '92! Special price ends 6/1/92.



To order by mail from Wargames West, please enclose $13.49 plus $4.00 for postage for MONSTER MYTHOLOGY. Money order/Credit card orders shipped on receipt. Please allow 4 weeks delivery time for personal checks. Call for further details. Offer expires June 1, 1992. But please check out the fine local stores listed in this ad that also honor this promotion.

Call for our free 136-page catalog 1-800-SAY-GAME

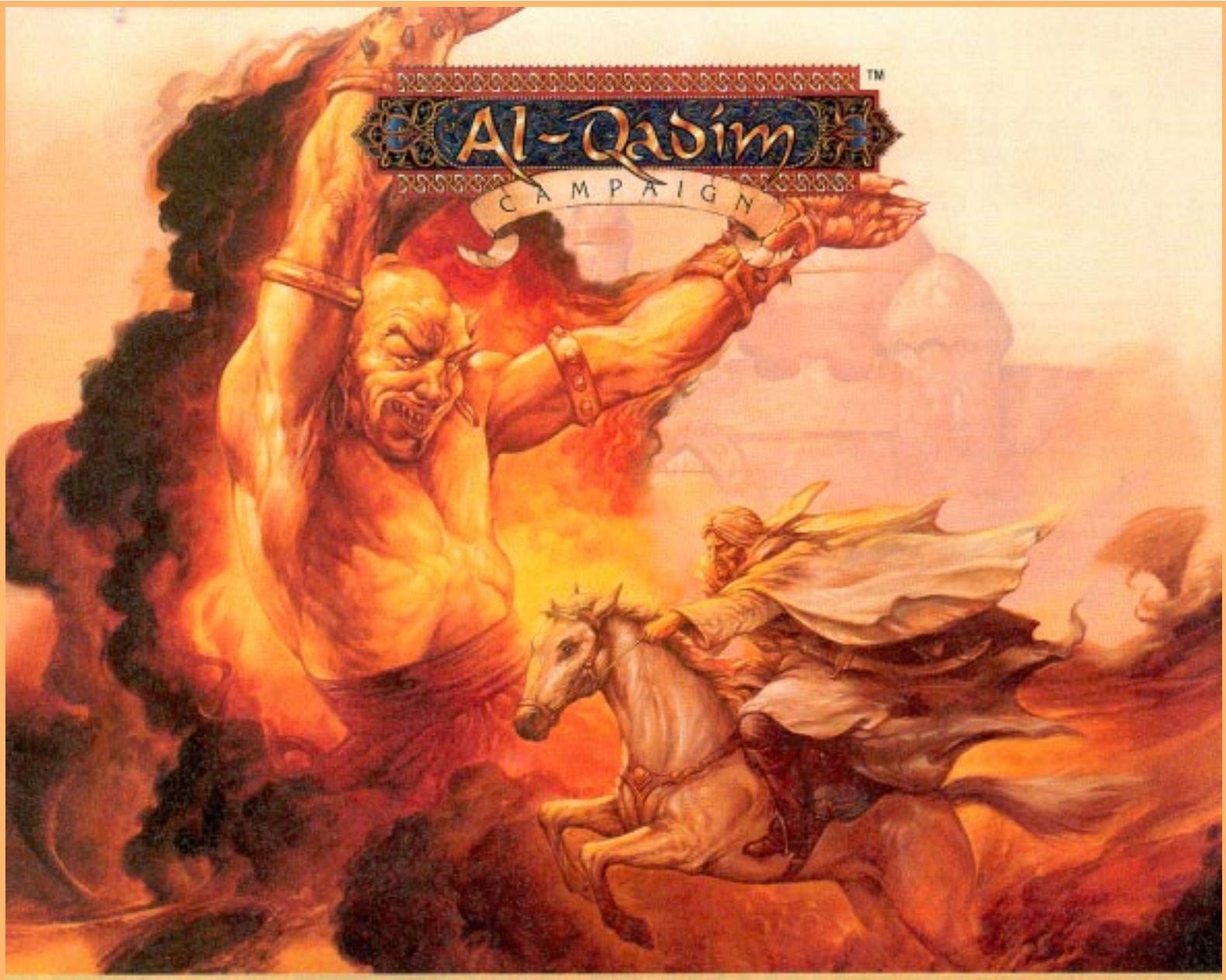
WARGAMES WEST
1-800-SAY-GAME
3422 Central Ave SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106



Special price listed for our MONSTER MYTHOLOGY promotion is also honored at these fine local stores listed below. Please check them out !

Waterloo Hobbies . . . . . Gilbert AZ	Book Trader . . . . . Minot ND
Roaming Panther . . . . . Glendale AZ	Wargames West . . . . . Albuquerque NM
Roaming Panther . . . . . Mesa AZ	Gamer's Guild . . . . . Clovis NM
Things for Thinkers . . . . . Tucson AZ	My Book Store . . . . . Las Cruces NM
Fan-Quest . . . . . Yuma AZ	Fantasy V . . . . . Roswell NM
Games of Berkely . . . . . Berkeley CA	Hobbies of Reno . . . . . Reno NV
Gamelords . . . . . Freemont CA	Crazy Egor's . . . . . Rochester NY
Brookhurst Hobbies . Garden Grove CA	Wizard's Wagon . . . University City MO
Games & Things . . . . . Larkspur CA	King's Hobby . . . . . Austin TX
Games & Things . . . . . Monterey CA	Rita's Fantasy Shop . . . . . El Paso TX
Riverside Hobbies . . . . Sacramento CA	Daily News . . . . . Midland TX
Hobby Hut . . . . . Grand Junction CO	Daily News . . . . . Odessa TX
Hobby Corner . . . . . Iowa City IA	Games People Play . . . . . Orem UT
Phoenix Rising . . . . . Fort Wayne IN	Farr Reaches . . . . . Provo UT
Great Plains Comics . . . . . Topeka KS	Tabletop Worlds . . . Salt Lake City UT
Game Shop of Wichita . . . . Wichita KS	Games People Play . West Valley City UT
Elliot's Little Wars . . . Baton Rouge LA	Games Plus . . . . . Arlington WA
Total Gamers . . . . . North Oxford MA	Book World . . . . . Midway WA
Rider's Hobby . . . . . Flint MI	O'Leary's Books . . . . . Tacoma WA
Rider's Hobby . . . . . Grand Rapids MI	Games Plus II . . . . . Woodinville WA
Page by Page . . . . . Worthington MN	Canada:
Diversions . . . . . Biloxi MS	Dragonstrike Victoria BC
Natch's . . . . . Missoula MT	2 Stores: Johnson Ave /University Hts Mall
Pair-A-Dice Games . . Winston-Salem NC	

AD&D is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc.



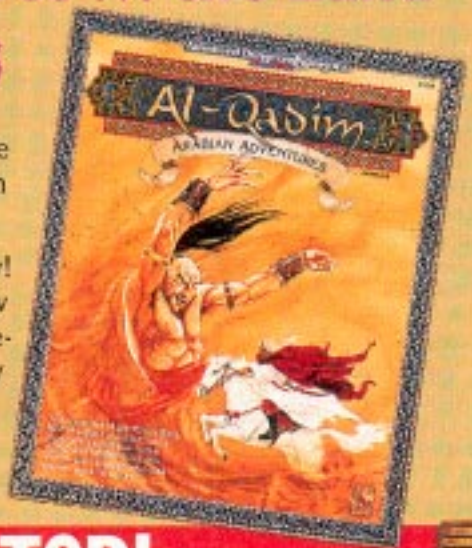
AL-QADIM™ Arabian Adventures ... the Land of Danger and Shifting Sands

The land of mythical Persia unfolds before you! Silken-robed sultans, desert raiders, jeweled caravans, treacherous genies, and more.

The action comes to life with TSR's new AL-QADIM™ game line! It's unlike anything you've ever seen.

We dare you to brave the spired palaces, lost cities, shifting sands, and adventures of Zakhara. It is written that once inside . . . you'll never turn back.

Begin your journey today! Discover the brand-new **Arabian Adventures** sourcebook. Available now at hobby and book stores everywhere!



NEW FROM TSR!

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc.
AL-QADIM and the TSR logo are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Colorful Connection

A crossword puzzle with unexpected encounters

by Raymond C. Young

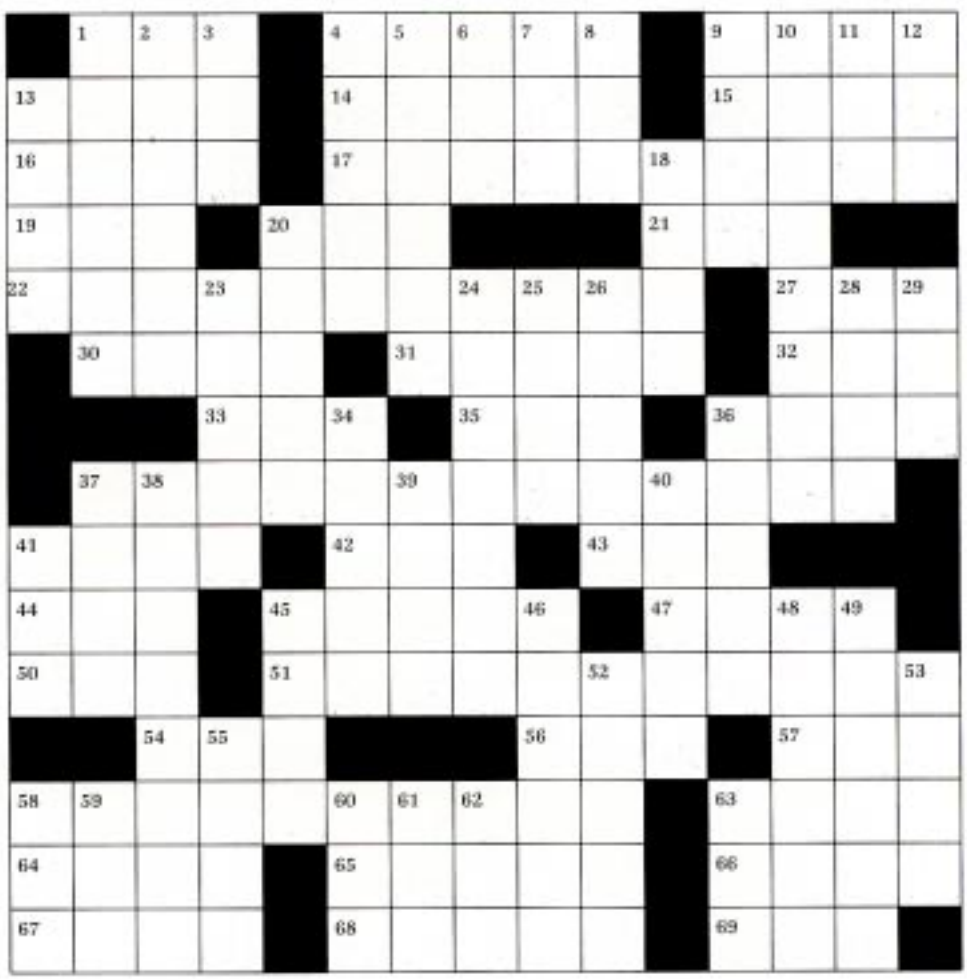
Lurking within the answers to this puzzle is a pattern. Five answers should give you clues, as should this puzzle's title. The answers are on page 50.

Across

1. Flightless bird from AD&D® 1st Edition *Monster Manual*
4. Weight unit for gems
9. Item used to rappel
13. Minstrels songs
14. "It was___ and stormy night...." (two words)
15. His enemy is Athena *(Legends & Lore)*
16. How a man makes a moat
17. Something red? (three words)
19. When gamers tire, they call___ night (two words)
20. Middle position (abbr.)
21. Suffix for imp?
22. Something green? (two words)
27. Individual controlled by the DM (abbr.)
30. Sitting-room furniture
31. A fish's armor
32. Blibdoolpoolp rules the kuo-___
33. Truly a beast of burden
35. Roman numerals for weeks in a year
36. Odorous, cold-dwelling humanoid
37. Something blue? (two words)
41. Associate editor Mr. Donovan
42. Opposite of "nope"
43. Romantic Egyptian sky goddess (2nd Edition *Legends & Lore)*
44. Hound of___ omen (FIEND FOLIO® tome)
45. Leprechauns are___
47. Old-time celebration
50. Javelin, to an *Oriental Adventures* samurai
51. Something white? (three words)
54. What a *robe of eyes* helps you do
56. M's, as written by Greek gods
57. ___ in one's beer (get emotional at a tavern)
58. Something black? (two words)
63. "Sage Advice" columnist Williams
64. You—after you meet Baba Yaga
65. Boat for shipping a large captive monster
66. "___'clock, and all is well." (two words)
67. Voice quality, used in role-playing characters
68. *Lens of___ reading (Tome of Magic)*
69. And so forth (abbr.)

Down

1. Mythologist Hamilton and namesakes
2. Kind of -saurus and -centipede
3. Starship___ *Enterprise*
4. Sources of water in desert terrain
5. Puts on fancy armor
6. What you should have done when you met Baba Yaga
7. How a nilbog spells "era"
8. What the referee calls when two ogrillons fight and one is too injured to continue (FIEND FOLIO tome; abbr.)
9. Boat you can make on a desert island
10. Pertaining to Kara-Tur
11. Guardian of the upper planes *(Monstrous Compendium*, Outer Planes appendix)
12. Direction from Waterdeep to the High Moor in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting
13. Evil plant spirit (D&D® game)
18. Weld metal together, as armorers do
20. Result of *teleporting* too high
23. Come___ (grow up; two words)
24. Celestial event
25. Healing lets you___ hit points
26. "Lawful evil" is one (abbr.)
28. Viking skald, for example
29. Vehicle on rails used for mining
34. Kind of "foam" that packing peanuts are made of
36. Lackey or carrier
37. Off in ___-land (fantasizing)
38. *Phantasmal force*
39. *Von Gasik's refusal*, taken literally *(Tome of Magic)*
40. Puzzle enthusiasts
41. Cantrip of darkness *(Unearthed Arcana)*
45. Diamonds and frozen water
46. Reverence to one's lord
48. Where to find a gem in an eye of fear and flame (FIEND FOLIO tome)
49. The publishing company of the AD&D game (two words)
52. Showed anger, Takhisis's way
53. Editor's boo-boo
55. Part of a battle axe
58. Toward the stern of the *Spelljammer*
59. ___Magnon (replaced Neanderthal)
60. Three tsp.
61. Hit in the jaw
62. How a bard says "before"
63. Sault___ Marie



CYBER HERO™

For all of you wanting to play in the cyberpunk genre *a la* the **HERO**™ rules, now you can!

The latest in the line of campaign books for the HERO system. In the tradition of *Fantasy Hero*™ and *Western Hero*,™ this book is all you need to start a campaign set in the grim, high-tech future. Included within are all the rules, guidelines and information to play in the cyber genre using the HERO System.™



THIS HUGE SUPPLEMENT CONTAINS:

- **package deals, equipment, cybergear, special combat rules, and source material to play in the gritty streets of the dark future**
- **Some of the most comprehensive rules governing the cyberspace net and travel through it—portrayed completely as only the HERO System can!**
- **Information and suggestions for adventures and a campaign in Cyber Hero.**
- **Numerous NPCs of every type.**
- **Guidelines for handling the power of a cyber campaign: heroic to superpowered.**
- **The use and abuse of cybernetics.**

HERO GAMES

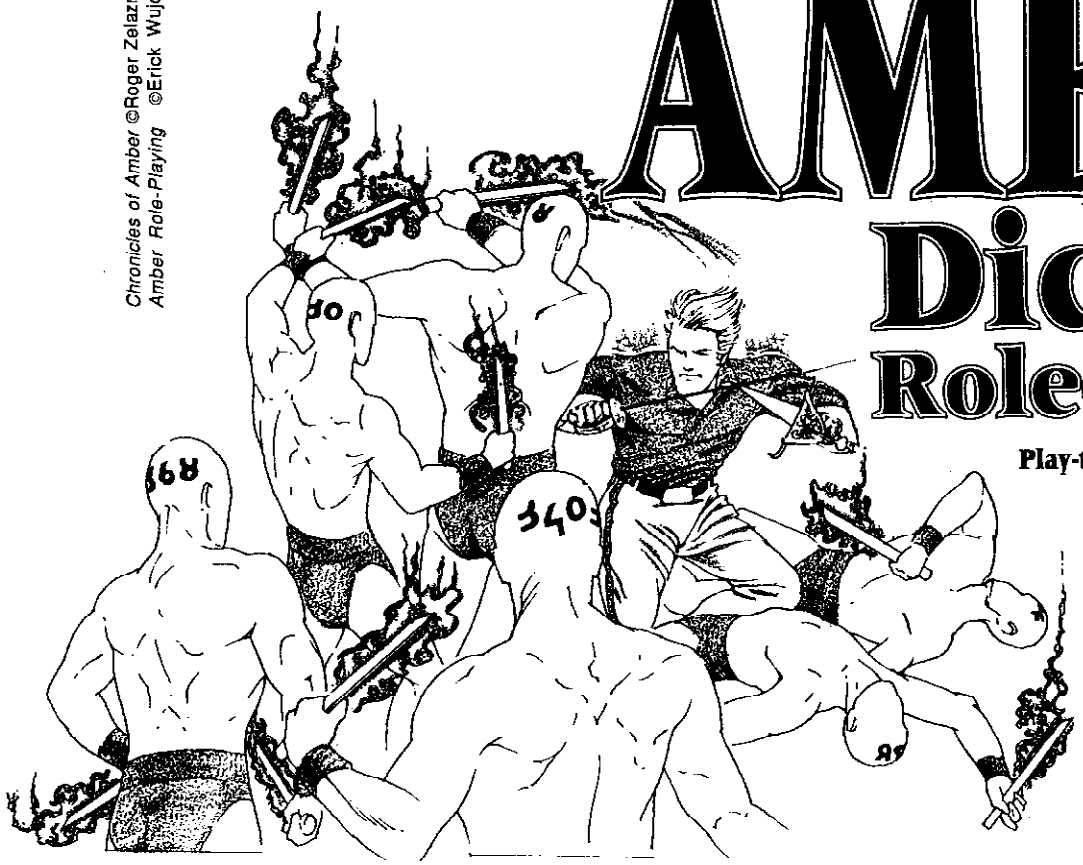
Stock #505

Distributed in the UK by Hobbygames Ltd.,
Unit S4 Rudford Industrial Estate
Ford Airfield Nr. Arundel, West Sussex
BN18 OBD Tel: 0903-730998

ICE
PO Box 1605
Charlottesville, VA 22902 USA
Write for a Free Catalog!

Chronicles of Amber ©Roger Zelazny
Amber Role-Playing ©Erick Wujcik

AMBER Diceless Role-Playing



Play-tested without dice since 1985.

Amberzine

If you're one of the 7,000 happy Amber players, then you might want to hustle to order ***Amberzine*** before it's too late! This ***limited run*** magazine is restricted to just *1,000 copies per issue.*

Send $10 for issue #1 or $40 for 5-issue subscription. **Note:** not available in stores!

1. What is *Amber?*

A completely new **diceless** role-playing system, based on the epic ***Chronicles of Amber*** books by Roger Zelazny.

It's 256 pages of crystal-clear instructions designed & written by **Erick Wujcik**, known for his work in ***Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles & Other Strangeness®***, ***Revised RECON®*** and ***Ninjas & Superspies™***

2. Do I have to read the *Amber* books to play?

No. You'll find the entire fantasy setting of *Amber* contained in this one book, from the great conflict between Chaos and Pattern, to descriptions of each of twenty main members of *Amber's* ruling family, and over 130 quotes to lend flavor and detail.

3. How do I create player characters without dice?

Each player starts with 100 points to build their character, buying Powers, Allies, Artifacts & Creatures, and, for as little as one point, players can buy ***Shadows***, whole universes built to their design.

But players can't spend their points until they establish their *Attributes*. Something they can only do by bidding against the other players in an *Attribute Auction* run by the Game Master.

Finally, each player determines their character's luck. *Good Stuff* costs points, and means that the Game Master will arrange for good things to happen to the character. Players short on points can get more by trading for *Bad Stuff* and misfortune.

4. How can Combat work without dice?

Simple. Combat is resolved by comparing character Attributes.

However, since Attributes are secret, the most important thing in combat is sizing up the opposition.

Do you press for an all-out attack? Bide your time and act defensively? Or try to "cheat" with a dirty trick?

Amber combat is flexible. An outstanding warrior can slay dozens, but battles between equals are not usually fought to the death. After all, once you know you're going to get smeared, why stick around? It makes more sense to bug out. And the same goes for your opponent.

5. Doesn't Amber require good Game Masters?

Honestly, yes. To make *Amber* role-playing better we had to also make it more challenging.

But *Amber* is also a book where Game Masters can learn from over 100 pages of tips, tricks & examples. There's even a section titled *"Good Game Masters create good role-players."*

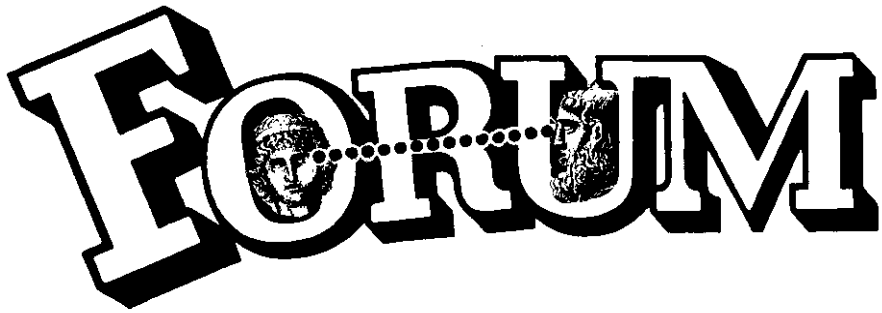
6. Okay, I'm interested. How can I find out more?

Send us a stamp, and we'll send you more information, including a **free** set of character sheets.

Or just plunk down $22.95 at your favorite hobby or comic store. For a mail order copy send a $25 check or money order to:

Phage Press
P.O. Box 519
Detroit, MI 48231-0519

Palladium Books® is a registered trademark of Kevin Siembieda and is not affiliated with Phage Press™
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles® is a registered trademark of Mirage Studios



"Forum" welcomes your comments and opinions on role-playing games. In the United States and Canada, write to: Forum, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Forum, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. We ask that material submitted to "Forum" be either neatly written by hand or typed with a fresh ribbon and clean keys so *we can read and understand your comments.*

I would like to address Mr. Donovan's comments in his editorial for issue #172. In that editorial, he discusses the pitfalls of introducing standard PCs to legendary characters. For the past five years, I have run adaptations of popular films—including *Escape From New York* (using the AD&D system), *The Warriors* (the AD&D system), and *Die Hard* (SJG's GURPS* game)—as adventures at the GEN CON® game fair. Judging from the players' feedback, the adventures were all very successful and everyone had a good time. Certainly it is easier to do such an adaptation when there is no existing campaign into which to integrate the adventure, but I have done that successfully as well.

While he correctly notes some of the problems associated with such an endeavor by using a past attempt as an example, Mr. Donovan does not realize the true source of his failure: rigidity. When Mr. Donovan set up his adventure, he had a "script" in his head that he wanted the PCs to follow, and he was prepared to lead them through that script. Well and good, but as he himself stated, "The first thing I failed to do was to consider all the possible actions the party could take . . ." Sometimes I think that GMs take the analogy of the GM being a god a bit too seriously. Attempting to do so is folly and will lead only to disappointment.

An adventure should be set up with the NPCs, the setting, and elements of a plot, but with no script for how the action and *interaction* should take place. When faced with the robbers (Robin and his band), the PCs should have been free to do whatever they liked, not be (to paraphrase Mr. Donovan) convinced, cajoled, or browbeaten into pursuing the script. Perhaps, if Robin had recognized the PC party as a significant power, he would have approached them differently ("Hi, guys! Mind if I join you while you wander through the woods? I'm heading that way myself. So, what's up?"). Robin has always been portrayed as a bright fellow, and he would surely change his methods if the situation warranted. Furthermore, there are few parties that could handle being surrounded by a company of 24 archers. I can just imagine it:

Fighter: "I reach for my sword."

Mage: "I cast *magic missile* at that guy in the green hood."

GM: "Well, guys, since they had their weapons trained on you and were waiting for you to do something stupid, they go first. Do the words 'pin cushion' mean anything to you?"

In order to avoid the initial problems encountered when the PCs meet the legend, the GM must be flexible and be able to improvise when the unexpected occurs.

Mr. Donovan's next argument deals with a game version of a film or legend paling in comparison to the original. However, I would argue just the reverse. When creating a completely original campaign, the GM must build all of the imagery, characters, and atmosphere completely from scratch. By borrowing from existing material, players who are familiar with the material already have the imagery in their heads. A simple statement like, "Remember the scene where . . ." or "Imagine Robin Hood saying . . ." will evoke imagery and feeling without any real effort on the GM's part. For example: "You are in a vast park. There are hundreds of other young people around, with groups dressed in gaudy costumes. A black man in robes climbs onto a makeshift stage and begins to speak." Anyone who has seen *The Warriors* will instantly remember gangs like the Baseball Furies and Turnbill ACs, with their distinctive outfits. Remember, the entire game is based on imagination. The players will be very receptive to the GM conjuring images from their memories. They are already familiar with all of the NPCs as well; they all know Robin Hood's Merry Men and how they can be expected to act. In my experience, players have always been delighted to meet fictional and legendary characters they recognize, even when I do not describe them explicitly. Once, during the adventure based on *The Warriors,* I described a small group of attractive young women out on the street. One of the players said, "Holy [expletive deleted], the Lizzies! Run!"

Mr. Donovan's next point had to do with the legends meshing closely with the existing campaign. To do otherwise, he asserts, will give the adventure the wrong "feel." I couldn't disagree more. Throwing the players a curve ball, shaking them up, or presenting them with something totally unfamiliar is an excellent way of refreshing a campaign. If the PCs only encounter what the players expect, complacency sets in and the campaign withers. There are many ways to avoid this, and using fictional and legendary figures is just one way. There is an entire subgenre of science fiction that deals with just this concept, one of the best being *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court,* by Mark Twain. The richness of this subgenre is generated by a central character being out of place in the setting, giving him the wrong feel. To use the previous example, an adventure based on "Conan in King Arthur's Court" presents such a unique set of circumstances and encounters to exploit that playing it would be a blast. Imagine Conan going head-to-head with a pompous Lancelot, and the point is made.

Mr. Donovan's last point, related to the previous one, is that the level of magic in the campaign must be taken into account when dealing with figures from other source material. I agree, but there is no reason to eliminate material that does not compare directly. Simply adapt the source material completely to the campaign. In other words, Robin Hood would be familiar with AD&D game magic and perhaps even have a mage in his band. Beware, however—the Sheriff of Nottingham would have equal access to magic. There is no reason why this cannot be done. In the Robin Hood scenario, a mage casting a *magic missile* might be quite surprised to have it reflected back by that *ring of spell turning* Robin is wearing.

Mr. Donovan's main argument was that by adapting the source material to the AD&D campaign, the source changes and loses its appeal. Not true. The appeal of Robin Hood has nothing to do with the fact that there is no magic in his world, or that he always has the upper hand against those who travel through his forest. In fact, some fiction has Robin interacting with otherworldly creatures, such as sprites and faeries, which are so popular in British fantasy. Robin's appeal is the irony of his situation: a basically good man who, through unfortunate circumstances, is forced to a life of thievery, all in order to serve the true king. He takes the real rogues and thieves of Sherwood Forest and forges them into a force of good. These concepts and story lines are universal, not confined to the current retelling of the tale. Look at how different Errol Flynn's Robin Hood is from Kevin Costner's. Yet, even with all the differences, most people are thrilled to accept both as Robin Hood. I would contend that the introduction of gunpowder into *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* is akin to introducing magic to him in an AD&D game campaign.

I hope that this discussion has given other GMs ideas on how to handle fictional and legendary figures in their campaigns. The main trick is to be flexible, not only with the PCs but with the NPCs as well. Adapt the legends to the AD&D game, so that they will not be at a great disadvantage or advantage to the PCs, and allow for deviations from the "script" you have in your head. If the situation evolves differently from what you expect, go with it. It will often be more fun than what you had in mind.

Adam Lesh
Los Angeles CA

In the AD&D 2nd Edition *Legends and Lore* cyclopedia, page 10, it states, "If [heroes who meet the right conditions for godhood] are player characters, they are removed from play and treated as a demigod *[sic]* from that point on." I see no reason for this. I believe that allowing PCs to become gods opens the door to clever DMs and players to take part in fantastic campaigns of epic proportions.

What's wrong with running a campaign of godly stature? Many DMs may argue that the characters will be too powerful and more than a match for any earthly creature, but this is a weak argument. I seriously doubt that any character who has met the conditions listed on page 10 of the *Legends and Lore* cyclopedia (twice average xp level in campaign, at least one 19 ability score, charisma at 18, over 200 followers, perfect alignment) and has then become a demigod would be interested in the sea monster in the bay or the troublemaker in the bar. Why worry about dragons down the street when there are fiends downstairs?

Others may say that a demigod character will have a field day in the DM's world, altering reality to meet his own needs. Keep in mind that the character is only a demigod, the weakest of all such powers, and he will be watched closely by the other gods in the pantheon.

The main argument, however, is that the campaign will lose all of the spirit of the AD&D game. I agree that the campaign will be very different from your average campaign, but I believe it will be a step above the normal campaign. Interacting with gods and other powerful beings would be a welcome reward to veteran players who have brought their heroes this far. Just imagine the adventures the PCs would now have and the beings they would meet. Good-aligned heroes may be sent by their greater powers to investigate an evil new power in the depths of the Astral plane or some previously undiscovered plane. I, as a DM, would have a field day creating new and powerful creatures and even entirely new universes.

I think that there should be more information for DMs and players who want to run godly campaigns, and I believe that these adventures can be very successful if handled correctly. The D&D® game did it with the Immortals Set rules, and the AD&D game is far more developed than the D&D game when it comes to gods and the planes. Whether or not TSR, Inc. publishes any information of this type, I will still begin adventures of this grand scale.

Steven Davis
Rockford MI

I have been playing FRPGs for some time now and I switched to the AD&D 2nd Edition rules not long ago. A friend of mine had told me that, in these new rules, the fighter character class was finally worth playing, as it was definitely inferior and not worth playing in the AD&D 1st Edition game. But, after reading the *Player's Handbook*, I found I had been greatly deceived. In fact, the fighter class was still the weakest character class and, even if the fighters were made a little more equal to the other classes with the advantage of weapon specialization, multiclassed characters received higher level limits than before! Why bother playing an inferior human fighter when you can arrive at relatively high levels of experience when playing a demihuman fighter/mage or other multiclassed character? The temptation to play a ranger or paladin instead of a "normal" fighter is still very high, as the latter is not as powerful as the others, and you might feel inferior to your fellows who are playing rangers or paladins in your group.

Is the fighter character class in danger of extinction? Or is it just going to survive at the price of being used only by the DM as an NPC source until the referee gets tired of role-playing characters so inferior to his PCs?

Some feedback on these topics would be very appreciated.

Victor Paraschiv
Brussels, Belgium

I am writing in support of the editorial written by Michael Stackpole that appeared in issue #171. In his editorial, entitled "Role-playing and the real world," Stackpole attempts to dispel certain misconceptions people have about role-playing games, including those who theorize role-playing games are mind manipulators that lure their participants into becoming disillusioned with reality and unnaturally violent toward society. As an avid gamer for over 10 years, I would like to extend my support for Mr. Stackpole's argument by making a comparison between the mentality of role-playing game players and the rest of society. Through my experiences over the last 10 years with role-playing games, I have found that the entertainment that role-playing games provide is quite similar to and certainly as harmless as America's favorite pastime: spectator sports.

First of all, Stackpole states that groups like Bothered About Dungeons & Dragons (BADD) claim that role-playing games allow players to escape into worlds of fantasy, thus forcing them to tune out the real world. I disagree with this allegation. How is it that millions of Americans can watch and enjoy professional sports without being sucked into their personal fantasies about the games they attend or watch? Gamers are not sucked into imagined worlds any more than a fan is sucked into his television set while watching the game. We use role-playing games not as a device to tune out reality, but rather as a contest in which the player can experience glory or defeat, much like the fan who loyally celebrates or agonizes over the exploits of his favorite team.

Another stand-out comparison that can be made between these two forms of entertainment is in the use of statistics. In the sports world, fans are frequently obsessed with number in sports—and not just with wins and losses, but with figures such as a players' batting average, shooting percentage, yardage gained, or goals scored. This is similar in the case of role-playing games as well. Players are constantly striving to better their characters' experience points, hit points, skill points, or armor classes.

Just like the spectator who has a favorite athlete, gamers also enjoy identifying with their favorite characters. Yet, the fan knows and realizes that he is separate from that favorite player just as the average gamer knows that he is separate from his character. This draws me to my point. The comparison between sports and role-playing games exists because each is nothing more than a contest with sets of established rules, designed to test its participants and entertain its viewers.

My final point is on the issue of violence in role-playing games. Stackpole attacks studies done by the National Coalition against Television Violence, and its allegations that role-playing games conjure up feelings of violence in their players. It is true that role-playing games often use imaginary violence (combat) as a tool to install a sense of excitement or danger into the game. Yet, it is also true that this violence is never graphic or descriptive in the way that it is on television. For example, I find it difficult to feel a sense of frenzied disquietude every time a character is "hit for eight points of damage." Sure, there are many acts of imagined violence in any given scenario, but these never come across as anything more descriptive than a set of numbers. In the case of television, many shows are indeed violent in nature, but (not to beat this comparison to death) so are sports. In fact, the Boston Bruins redefine the word "violence" every time they take to the ice—and this is real violence, too. No father can say to his son, "Don't worry, it's only Hollywood makeup and special effects," every time a hockey player bashes another's lower jaw into splinters with his fist or stick. My point is that we live in a society that is engulfed in violence, and though much of it is modeled after that which is found in the entertainment world, we certainly cannot pin the blame on role-playing games.

I feel strongly about this issue, and I have made this comparison because I have enjoyed both sports and role-playing games throughout my life, yet still kept a clear head on my shoulders. Neither has ever affected my perception of reality in any form. Thus, I strongly support both role-playing games and sports, as they are both harmless, great forms of entertainment for kids who wish to keep clear of the real dangers in the modern age: unsafe sex, drugs, and gang violence.

Jake Remley
Newburyport MA

Ω

* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.



Specialists in: Computer Games and Role Playing Games



FICTION FACTORY
MAIL ORDER
0782 201030

For **ALL** your Roleplay & Computer needs.
Computer Software & Roleplay Catalogue
£1.00

Unit 17, West Precinct, (Bus Station), Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire, England ST1 1RJ

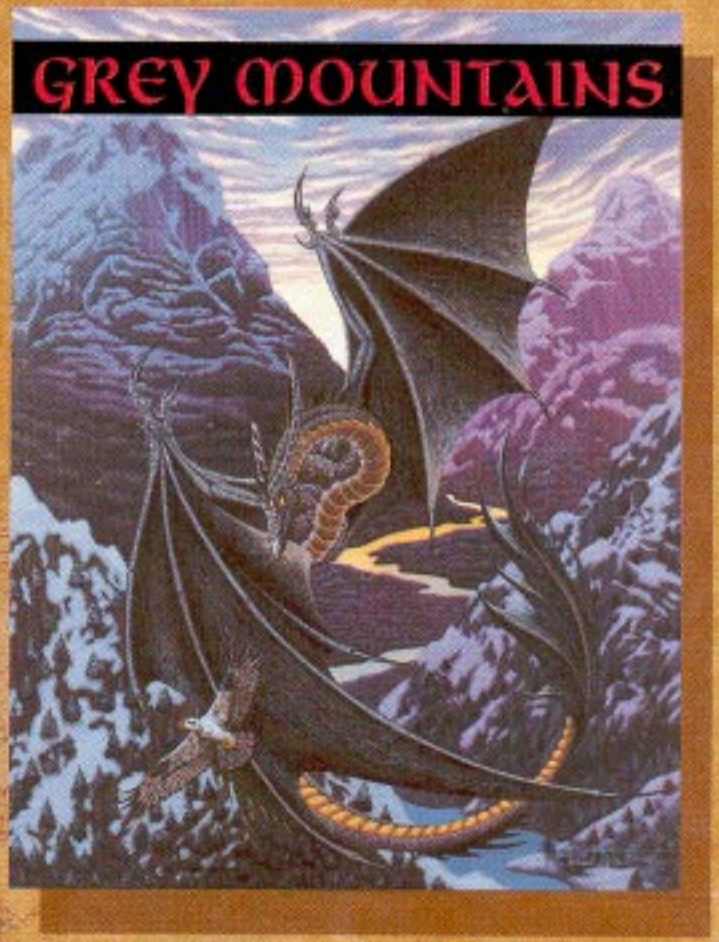
Two new supplements for. . .

MIDDLE EARTH™

GREY MOUNTAINS

144 pages long, *Grey Mountains* is a sourcebook featuring 9 adventures in the Northern Mirkwood and Angmar area. Sites include the Dwarven City of Norr-Dûm and the Ice-orc fortress of Kala Dulakurth. Contains a 17" x 22" full-color map.

Stock # 3113



RIVER RUNNING: THE DARK LORD TURNS EAST

A large (96-page) adventure supplement, *River Running* is set in the frontier lands near the Sea of Rhûn. Here the Necromancer of Dol Guldur has cast his long shadow and sent his cruel servants. Includes six complete adventures, full NPC stats, layouts and maps.

Stock # 8114



Produced by
ICE
P.O. Box 1605
Charlottesville, VA 22902 USA

Copyright © 1992 by Tolkien Enterprises. MIDDLE-EARTH and THE HOBBIT are registered trademarks of Tolkien Enterprises. All characters and places derived from the books of J.R.R. Tolkien are common law trademarks used by license from Grafton Books (Harper Collins) publishing successors to Unwin Hyman Ltd. and George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Distributed in the UK by
Chris Harvey Games,
P.O. Box 38, Bath St, Walsall WS1 3BY
44-922-28-181 FAX: 44-922-721644

Prepare for a Future of Great Adventures!



Fill out and mail the subscription card in this issue.

If the card is missing, write to:

Dungeon®
ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

Subscriptions:
DUNGEON® Adventures
P.O. Box 111
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

DUNGEON is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1990 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

The VOYAGE of the PRINCESS ARK

Part 27: To death and back

by Bruce A. Heard

This series chronicles the adventures of an Alphatian explorer and his crew as they journey across the D&D® Known World in their skyship. The information herein may be used to expand D&D campaigns using the Gazetteer series.

From the Journals of
PRINCE HALDEMAR OF HAAKEN
Lord Admiral of the Mightiest Empire
Captain of the Ever-Victorious
PRINCESS ARK
Imperial Explorer, etc, etc.

Nyxmir 18, AY 2001: Soon after loading several barrels of genuine Boisjolis Nouveau from Renardy into the *Princess Ark*, our mighty ship steered to the southwest. Several days passed as we continued our exploration of the Savage Coast. The term "savage" has little bearing on the people who dwell on these shores, yet their societies have remained very fragile, nevertheless. Massive Hule looms to the northeast. Far to the north reign the barbarian hordes. Great tribes of humanoids hold the Yazak Steppes. There is cinnabar, too, the vile substance that gives power but corrupts its user. All this could sweep the coast, brutally returning these budding kingdoms to lawlessness and the darkest barbarism.

As I reflected on these possibilities, Myojo informed me that we had reached the southernmost cape of a kingdom called Bellayne. He was excited, for he had heard this was a nation of rakastas. Surely their queen would have heard of our performance in Louvines. This presented a problem, since the Renardois and the Bellaynish were bitter rivals. We might be perceived in Bellayne as lupin sympathizers, and therefore suspicious visitors.

So be it. The *Princess* was made *invisible*, and I decided to disembark with Myojo and Raman, going incognito as travelers from Dunwick. We would visit the countryside and observe the people of Bellayne, which would be helpful later should I decide to meet their queen. It wouldn't do to commit an unfortunate faux-pas on our first visit there.

I chose an old ruined castle as our landing point. The gloomy fortress stood over a cliff, overlooking the Western Sea in the sunset. The Saragón Gazetteer indicated this to be Castle Malburn. It would be an easy spot for Talasar to find. As we left the ship, I ordered Talasar to keep exploring the coast—and especially to keep moving. There could still be Heldannic prowlers in the sky, looking for an opportunity to lash out at the *Princess*. Talasar was to return in two days. We would spend the night there and begin our visit in the morning.

Nyxmir 19: Something terrible happened during the night. We awoke to find our old friend Raman dead, with neither any sign of a fight nor any wound on his body. Had he been killed during his watch? Who could have done this, and why? He had an expression of horror on



Artwork by Terry Dykstra

DYKSTRA ©92

his face, his eyes wide with fear. He reminded me of the man we found dead in Slagovich—the one called Pustek, if I remember it. We never knew what had happened to him. Was his fate linked to that of our Raman? The Master might have been behind this, but why Raman and not me?

There was little we could have done for our friend. With pain in our hearts, we wrapped Raman's body and his beloved books in his blanket, then placed them inside a large barrel. Once the barrel was covered with stones, we somberly left. We would recover the body when Talasar returned. A few hours after our departure, a farmer on his way to Theeds picked us up on his cart.

Time unknown—Raman, from a later account: "Hey, what happened? Where am I?" My words echoed in the dark. I thought I must have fallen asleep during my watch. I'd had a horrible nightmare in which the ghost I met at the Tower of Mercy in Vilaverde had found me. She attacked me again and again, moaning "Revenge . . . revenge . . ." I woke up just as she struck the final blow, and a chill ran down my back.

The sun hadn't come up yet. Good, I thought, I had not been asleep too long. I must have somehow wandered away from the ruins. I started to return and check the safety of my two companions, but it was dark and I had difficulties finding my way back.

Nyxmir 20—Haldemar: Theeds-upon-Blythe was a city like many others we had seen on our journey. The majority of its people were indeed rakastas. Humans were not uncommon, including polite locals, quiet merchants from Dunwick, brash bankers from Smokestone City, and refined exporters from Boa Mansao. There were even a few elves and dwarves, probably Eusdrians, and a handful of native halflings. The latter seemed perfectly suited to Bellayne's orderly ways.

We entered a small tavern called Ye Olde Shoppe to rest from our journey from Castle Malburn. "'Tis not opened yet, milords!" said the rakasta innkeeper. "The meat pies aren't ready."

"I beg your pardon," I responded, "but we are tired from our journey. We hoped to find rest and refreshment here."

"I'll say!" intervened the serving wench. "You can't possibly send our guests out this way! 'Tis almost tea time, my dear!"

"Great Cats, you're right! Steam the kettle, love. I'll fetch the crumpets at once!" said the innkeeper.

"A cloud of milk, milord?" asked the wench of Myojo. "And where might you be from? I don't know your accent. Dear me, of course, you must be from the Forest Marches, true?"

Wide eyed with confusion, Myojo muttered, "Yes , . . yes . . . Forest Marches."

"Truly amazing," she went on. "One lump or two? I never met the forest folks. I always pictured them with green overalls and feathered hats, you know. Any kippers? Or a slice of pudding, perhaps?"

"You are annoying our guests, love," intervened the innkeeper. "Let them rest, and stoke the fire, please."

The folks of Bellayne seemed a friendly people. The day went on in this way as we visited the city and learned about its people. But nothing could truly ease our hearts after the death of Raman. I could still not understand it. It was so sudden and meaningless. I wished I could still see his face and hear his voice.

Time unknown—Raman, from a later account: Something was terribly wrong. The sun had not risen for what seemed an eternity. There was no castle to be found. The cliff was gone, and so was the sea. Could have I wandered so far to be this lost? I kept running into crisscrossing dirt paths and bare rocks. The trees here had nothing in common with what I had seen before. This was too confusing.

"A penny for your thoughts, Raman," said a voice behind me. I turned and saw her, the ghost I first met at the library in Porto Preto. However, she now wore the leather cuirass of an adventurer and held a serrated sword. Her skin bore the red mark of cinnabryl. "Welcome to my world, old sage," she said with a wicked smile.

"Your world? What world?" I asked.

"Have you not found out yet? You disappoint me. Come now, old sage. This is your last discovery. This is Limbo, my dear, and you are the merest reflection of what you once were. You are mine now."

"You lie, fiend! This is all trickery!" I responded, feeling a terrible sense of coldness in my spine.

"Spare me. You failed me once and now I've come to make you my servant—and serve you will, old sage, for I need your soul to guard my grave." She brandished her sword. An evil glint came from its blade as she turned into a vile, crimson spectre.

I screamed in horror and ran. The nightmare would not end. Many times she found me cowering behind a rock or trembling in the shadow of an ethereal tree, but I was lucky and escaped her for some time. So it was true—I was dead, dead and lost in Limbo.

Nyxmir 21—Haldemar: Despite our depression, Myojo and I saw that Bellayne was a very likable place, except for the food. It seemed no real enmity existed between the Renardois and their feline neighbors, other than a natural dislike of each other. A question of taste, I guess. At least they had common foes in the north, and that alone kept them from the worst. Their queen, Her Gracious Majesty Catherine "The Lioness," is both honored and beloved of her people. She was seen as a strong and wise ruler, which was what I wanted to hear. This place seemed pleasant enough, but it was time to return to the *Princess Ark* and give Raman a decent burial, then to mourn our loss.

In Limbo—Raman, from a later account: In my flight from the red spectre, I discovered a strange place that looked like a city. All was dark and crooked, as if the very forces of Chaos had built its streets and houses. There were people there, many people, the souls of lost creatures like me, all seemingly stranded there. Since I was dead anyway, there wasn't much I could lose, so I entered and explored this bizarre place.

Nobody seemed to mind my presence. There were shops selling various baubles, tools, and weapons—but no food. Indeed, I felt no hunger. Like any other city, it came with rather obnoxious folks, pick-pockets, haughty lords, and beggars who looked shrivelled, as if the light in their souls was fading. One faintly begged me, "Have pity, master. Have pity for one who withers. Please, bestow me with the gift of life, and I'll serve you, my master. A mere shred of your life . . ." I kept moving.

I found what looked like a twisted hostelry, where I rented a room where I could rest. The keeper, probably another lost soul like me or perhaps a deceased innkeeper himself, asked for his dues. I dropped a few coins on the desk; I seemed to have all my old clothing and items, even in death. The innkeeper looked up, surprised. "A newcomer, eh?" He blew on the coins and they dissipated into thin air. "Your wealth is no more in the world beyond. I request your true wealth."

"And what might this be?" I asked nervously.

"A mere shred of your life, stranger," he said, pointing to a vial. "Touch here." I did, and a cold sensation crept up my arm. I felt a bit more tired. So this is what a "shred" was! In this world, only one's lifeforce had any value. I'd better learn quickly how to use it. I went to my quarters.

I was happy to discover I still had my trusted library scroll, and it worked. Perhaps this was a mere reflection of my true books, but I could still browse. How long would it last? I had no way to tell.

I spent a very long time there, alone and quiet, studying what little information I could dig up on Limbo and its laws. The city was a safe haven, but also a backwater, for it led nowhere. Many souls ended up there, afraid of Limbo's wilderness. Those who were strong of heart and faithful to their Immortals could find a way to eternal rest, somewhere beyond this Limbo. Others cowered in the City of the Dead, safe perhaps but stranded until they decided to meet their fates.

Someone knocked at my door. A tall figure stood there, wrapped in a long black robe with a hood. It whispered, "You seek escape, human. I can sense it."

"What do you want?" I inquired.

"I know what you seek, and I know where it lies," it hissed.

"What do you know of what I want? And what does it matter to you? Begone!" This character was truly disturbing.

"Your companions are grieving," it whispered again. "They await your return

from beyond."

"No one can leave here. What happened has happened. Now go away."

It slowly shook its head. "Not so, human. There is a way. You can return to your friends, and I know how."

It dawned on me that perhaps this could lead somewhere. "And you'll reveal to me your dark secret if I pay you—don't tell me—a shred of my life!"

"Five, human. Five shreds of your life, or darkness forever," it whispered.

"Prove to me first that you don't lie! I will not let go of my life so easily!"

The gaunt soul breathed deeply, then whispered, "In the City of the Dead, no one can cheat on a pact. The law of the Immortals binds me to my word."

"So be it. Tell me your secret, and I will pay you."

"Seek the rock on which an obelisk stands. Beyond, at the bottom of the fallen bridge, lies a gate. It leads back to your world. Go quickly, for your time now runs faster."

The gaunt creature grasped my wrist with a skeletal hand. I could see spectral flesh materializing slowly on its bones as it drained my lifeforce. Then it left, quietly and mysteriously. I felt very weak, and I could see in a mirror I had faded a bit. This was troublesome. I had to move on. It seemed to me I had been here for over 10 days already.

Nyxmir 22—Haldemar: At last we recovered Raman's body and returned to the ship. Consternation overtook the crew at the sad news. Talasar began to prepare the mourning ceremony and the last prayers for Raman.

His remains were brought to the chapel, and incense was lit around them. A few candles were all that brought light to the chapel. The crew entered one by one to pay their last respects to Raman. Later that night, the officers, Lady Abovombe, Myojo, Nyanga, Leo, and myself remained for an eve of mourning. Talasar then began the prayer for the dead.

In Limbo—Raman, from a later account: At last, here it was—I had found the obelisk! From where I stood, I could see a fallen bridge below. I started scrambling toward it when I heard a familiar voice.

"And where do you think you are going, old sage?" The red ghost was there, standing in front of me. "It took you some time to get here. I thought you would never leave that city. Your five shreds of life felt so sweet, old sage! How kind of you to bestow me with something so dear."

This evil soul had lured me out of the city's protection. I had no hope of defeating her now; I was too weak. I knew the pact was still good, but I would have to reach the gate first.

Again, she turned into her dreadful spectral incarnation and approached. Other voices then rose in the distance. Faint at first, they grew in strength. I could have sworn I recognized Talasar's voice among them. It was compelling me to move toward the bridge.

The crimson spectre screeched and charged, her sword raised to strike me. Suddenly she stopped, dropped the sword, and fell to her knees, screaming in pain. She had hit a magical barrier around me, like some sort of protection from *evil* spell.

"Cursed be thee, cleric of Razud! Cursed be all your crew!" croaked the crimson spectre. I had no wish to hear more. I ran to the gate, and all became black again.

Nyxmir 23—Haldemar: The night of mourning was over. It was time to return Raman's mortal remains to the care of the sea by the light of dawn, as demanded by naval tradition. The crew stood at attention as Raman's shrouded body was placed on the plank. Talasar uttered his last prayer and farewell when Ramissur blew his whistle to signal Raman's final departure, with two long, saddening notes.

Suddenly, Raman's body lurched, moaned, and sat up on the plank. Frightened out of their wits, the sailors holding the plank screamed and accidentally dropped the plank overboard—along with Raman's body!

Ramissur immediately dove overboard to recover our friend. By some miracle, Raman had come back to life, barely avoiding another death by drowning this time. Pale, exhausted, and visibly shaken, he was brought back to his quarters a mere shadow of himself. After a long rest, perhaps he could tell us whatever it was that happened to him. Until then, Talasar would remain with him at all times. There was no telling what might come from beyond to reclaim his soul.

To be continued...

The world beyond

A study completed by Raman Nabonidus, Sage and 1st Engineer of the *Princess Ark:*

"As many people correctly believe, a living being is made of two basic elements, material and immaterial—body and soul. The body results from the interaction of forces pertaining to the Spheres of Matter and Time. Matter makes up the body, while Time regulates its natural life.

"The soul requires elements pertaining to the Sphere of Thought and Energy. Thought allows the soul to be sentient, while Energy allows to it exist. It is the soul that animates and governs the body when both are joined. Without it, the body soon perishes.

"A fifth element exists, one that initially binds soul to body. This element pertains to the Sphere of Entropy. It is strong at birth, then weakens as years pass. If natural death occurs, that bond withers, allowing the soul to leave the body. Otherwise, the remaining entropic force is released in the Prime plane or wherever the body was at the time of death. This force is one that creatures of Entropy feed upon. . . ."

Limbo

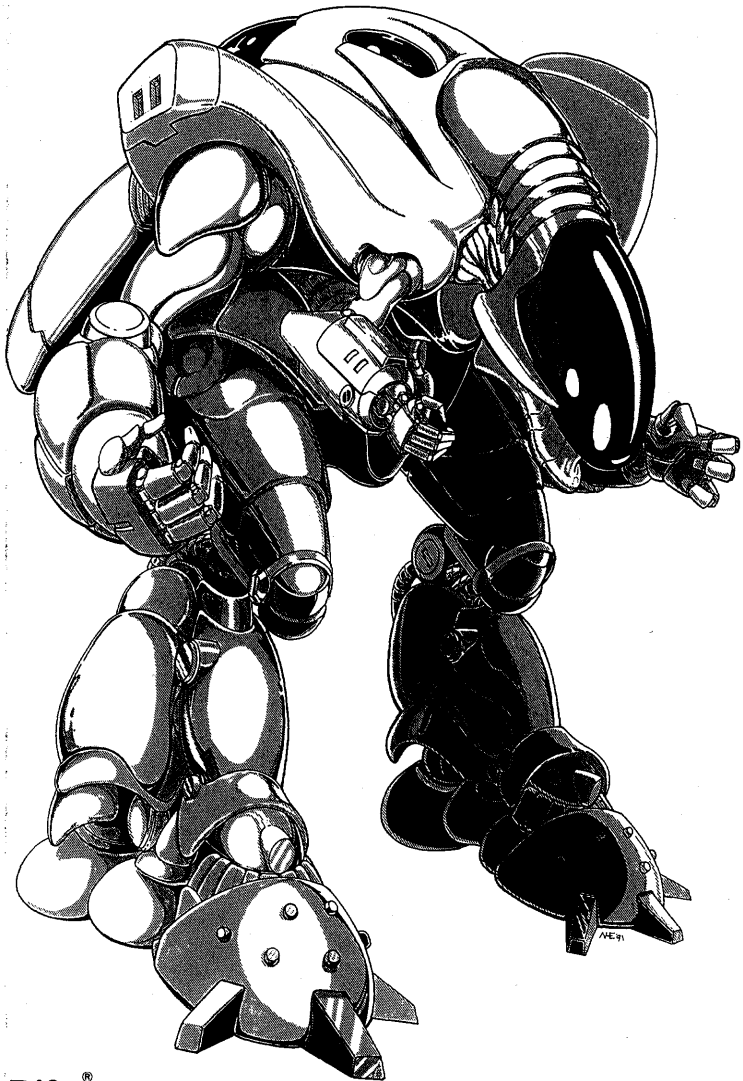
At the time of death, a soul is immediately transported to Limbo, a very remote outer plane. It is a dark and mysterious place that no living being but Immortals may enter. There, the soul may seek eternal rest or struggle to return to its body, thinking it still has unfinished business.

Chaos is the dominant element in Limbo. It affects many things, from the physical laws to the passing of time. Time in Limbo runs differently than in the Prime plane. The first day a soul "lives" in Limbo lasts only an hour in the Prime plane. The second consecutive day in Limbo lasts two hours in the Prime plane, the third consecutive day three, and so forth. At this rate, an uninterrupted year in Limbo would be a little over seven years in the Prime plane, and a decade there would last seven centuries on the Prime plane!

When a soul manages to leave and then return to Limbo, the passage of time resets itself, so a day there is equal to an hour in the Prime plane. Time in Limbo can always be measured with a sundial despite the lack of any sun. Natural sundials exist in Limbo's wilderness. The mark of the sun on the dial actually glows no matter how the sundial is held. Sigils on sundials mark the passing of weeks, months, and years. Magical hourglasses may also mark the corresponding time in the native plane of the entity consulting it.

The passing of time in Limbo explains why two creatures who entered that plane at different times will not be able to exit it and reappear in the Prime plane at the same time. For example, two warriors die during a battle. The first warrior dies at dawn, the other at noon (six hours later). Both meet in Limbo. This means the first warrior has already spent three full days there (three days in Limbo equal six hours in the Prime plane). Together they manage to find a gate back to the Prime plane after another four days in Limbo. By then, the first warrior has spent seven days in Limbo, and the other only four. If both enter the gate simultaneously, the first warrior appears 28 hours after his death (at 10 A.M. the day *after* his death), and the second warrior appears 10 hours after his death (at 10 P.M. on the day of his death). If they met again in the Prime plane and both reentered the gate to Limbo at the same time, time in Limbo would affect both in the same way from this point on.

As long as a soul remains in Limbo, it appears, feels, and thinks like its living counterpart, though it neither ages nor requires food or water. It possesses all items the character carried or wore at the time of his death, complete with magical abilities. The soul and its equipment are only "reflections" of what they once were. Magical-item reflections function only in Limbo, being powerless in the Prime and other planes. Should the next living owner of the deceased character's magical items die in the Prime plane, the old reflections of these item would dissipate and reap-



Rifts® and After the Bomb®/TMNT Sourcebook

Mutants in Orbit™

Mutants in Orbit™ is an adventure and sourcebook for **Rifts®** and **After the Bomb®** (TMNT/Heroes Unlimited™).

The **After the Bomb®** portion of this supplement takes a look at the intelligent mutant animals (and other life forms) that have survived the nuclear holocaust that nearly obliterated life on mother Earth. Life continues in the shelter of orbital space stations, and moon bases, around the Earth. Conflicts involve mutants of all kinds, space pirates, giant insects and aliens.

The **Rifts** portion of the book deals with the question of what's out there. The inhabitants of **Rifts Earth** can not get into orbit. All attempts to enter space result in destruction or disappearance. No one knows why. This book answers that question with some surprising data. Great for **Rifts** players looking for a more science fiction and outer space adventure. Ships February.

Highlights Include:

- **Mutant generation tables and info on how to add Heroes Unlimited™ superpowers and characteristics.**
- **Mutant insects.**
- **Space stations and moon bases — S.D.C. & M.D.C. stats.**
- **A.R.C.H.I.E. Seven and the CAN Republic (Rifts).**
- **Virtual Reality Robot Defense System (Rifts).**
- **Glitterboys and juicers in space, plus mutants and more!**
- **Bomb section by James Wallis, Rifts section by Siembieda.**
- **Art by Long and Gustovich.**
- **124 pages — 11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.**

Other Great RPGs

Heroes Unlimited™. This massive 248 page role-playing game is still one of the few super-hero games that enables players to create every genre of hero: cyborgs, robots, aliens, mutants (human and animal), and men of magic, as well as super-sleuths, martial artists, weapons masters, psychics, and even crazy heroes.

The magic section is extensive, including not only the traditional wizard, but heroes empowered by magic weapons and amulets. Gadgets include bionics, robotics, trick weapons, and super-vehicles. 70 super-power categories, many of which offer many sub-abilities within that power category, plus psionic powers, magic, and skills. If you haven't seen this exciting and complete game, check it out today! **$19.95 plus $2.00** for mail order.

Villains Unlimited™ — New! The world has just become a little more dangerous. Dozens of super-villains, mutants, and monsters, new super powers, evil organizations, and death defying adventures await you in **Villains Unlimited.** The 200+ page sourcebook contains complete character descriptions for over 50 super villains (mutants, aliens, and others), villain groups, global assassin organizations, new super powers, adventures, and more. This is the first "official" supplement for the popular **Heroes Unlimited™**, but is also directly compatible with **Ninjas & Superspies™, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles®, Rifts®,** and even **Beyond the Supernatural™.** Over 200 pages — $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.

REVISED Ninjas & Superspies™ offers 41 forms of martial art hand to hand combat, cyber agents, gadgeteers, secret organizations, cyber-disguises and implants, and more! Completely compatible with **Heroes Unlimited™, Villains Unlimited™, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles & Other Strangeness®, Rifts®,** and the entire **Palladium Megaverse®!** Written by Erick Wujcik — 176 pages. **$14.95 plus $1.50** for postage and handling.

Beyond the Supernatural™ is an excursion into the realm of contemporary horror. This complete role-playing game includes psychic and mystic player characters, ley lines, magic, and supernatural monsters. The monster section is comprehensive and unique and the magic system really works in the modern world. Over 250 pages; ties directly to **Rifts** with its psychic powers and the concept of ley lines and magic energy. The supernatural monsters (and characters to a lesser degree) can be dropped into the **Rifts** RPG with ease. The **Rifts Conversion Book™** provides exact information on how to integrate **Beyond** characters smoothly into **Rifts. $19.95 plus $2.00** for mail order.

Palladium Role-Playing Game™ (fantasy). The game that launched Palladium Books is more popular today than ever before. The quick combat, balanced magic system, variety of magic powers, and unique world environment has made the **Palladium RPG** a classic. Players can select from 19 character classes and a variety of different races to use as player characters, including the traditional human, elf, dwarf, and orc, to the more exotic *wolfen, changeling, ogre, troll, and others*. Books like **Monsters & Animals** offer players even more optional player races, including giants, ratlings, and lizard men and a ton of NPC monsters and more world information. An exciting realm of fantasy. 274 pages, **$19.95 plus $2.00 for postage & handling.**

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles® & Other Strangeness. If you think the TMNT game is just for little kids, then you haven't seen *Palladium's TMNT role-playing game* for something really different. Gritty, pulse-pounding adventure and mutant animal player characters of all kinds. Anything goes. Make your adventures and heroes as zany, outrageous, dramatic or realistic as you desire. Don't underestimate this RPG which was created years before the Turtles hit television. Over 150,000 sold! Only **$11.95 plus $1.50** for postage and handling.

Palladium Books®' 1992 Winter Catalog is now available and features descriptions on the entire *Palladium product line* including **Rifts®, Robotech™, RECON®, videocassettes, T-shirts,** and **coming attractions** for our many new 1992 products.



Palladium Books®
Dept. D

5926 Lonyo Avenue
Detroit, MI 48210

Available at hobby shops and comic stores everywhere!

Copyright © 1992 Kevin Siembieda.
Palladium Books®, Megaverse®, Rifts®, After the Bomb® and RECON® are trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda. All other titles are trademarks of Kevin Siembieda. TMNT is a registered trademark owned and licensed by Mirage Studio.

pear in the possession of the last owner's soul when it reaches Limbo. Exception: Artifacts have no reflection in Limbo.

A soul in Limbo senses when its former possessions, such as weapons, tools, clothes, and so on, are being used on the Prime plane. It also knows if they are being used in a way the soul would approve of. The physical objects and their reflections in Limbo are closely linked. The older the object or the stronger its magic, the greater the bond. An intelligent sword could even communicate with its owner on the Prime plane and its previous owner's soul in Limbo. Think again before stealing a sword from an ancient tomb; one never knows to whom it once belonged, and the owner's soul might come back from Limbo and haunt the grave robber until the sword is finally returned to the tomb.

Most spells may be cast normally, except for traveling spells used in an attempt to leave Limbo. A *teleport* spell used to move from one region of Limbo to another will function. *Teleport*, *travel*, *word of recall*, or *wish* spells used in an attempt to exit Limbo will fail. The only way to leave Limbo is through adventuring. Likewise, all healing spells and all spells related to life, death, or souls *(e.g.*, *raise dead*, *speak to the dead*, *animate dead*, *magic jar*, or a *wish* used in any way affecting death) cannot be cast from inside Limbo. Entering or leaving Limbo heals any damage done to the soul.

To a soul, the environment in Limbo looks and feels as if it were a tangible reality. For D&D game purposes, the soul is played exactly like the live character was, with armor class, hit points, movement, and so forth. Of course, a soul that just arrived in Limbo doesn't immediately believe it is "dead." The soul needs time to come to that conclusion.

Limbo may take different aspects, depending on the character and his cultural background. For example, a character from Ochalea may see Limbo as a shadowy Oriental garden with pagodas, while a character from the Northern Reaches could see it as giant glaciers battered by dark, thunderous storms. For those without such beliefs, Limbo is likely to look like dirt paths winding through jagged rocks. The sky ranges from a dim, gray twilight to total darkness. Eerie algae and veils of Spanish mosses seem to stretch forever from the ground up into the starless sky. Even though the ethereal plants sway slowly as if in some imaginary breeze, a sound like a howling wind can be faintly heard far away in the darkness. Occasionally, a screech or the rumble of falling rocks echoes in the distance. Limbo is a cold, dismal place, with grays and blacks dominating throughout.

If one flew "upward" alongside the algae, he would discover that their other end is rooted in a land that is the mirror image of the one he just left, as if Limbo were a giant sphere. If one could dig into the ground, he would reappear on another surface in all ways identical to the one he just left. These places are all infinite extensions of the same world, like interlocking Möbius strips. Like the Prime plane, Limbo is not a finite universe; this is due to the predominance of Chaos in Limbo.

Many creatures populate Limbo, ranging from the lost souls of otherworldly beings to creatures of Entropy and predators unique to Limbo. These latter seek to destroy lost souls, for they feed on elements related to the Spheres of Thought. These entropic entities represent ultimate oblivion for those who fall before them. They usually remain in Limbo, since other planes are deadly to them. Only the more powerful ones dare linger in the Prime plane, often in an attempt to stalk prey that escaped them. The more powerful the prey, the more it will attract these denizens' hunger. Other beings haunt Limbo as well, including Immortals on a quest or fiends with some dark scheme in mind.

Seeking eternal rest

The souls of nonplayer characters entering Limbo will seek eternal rest in most cases, at the DM's discretion. If not, skip to the next section, "Returning home."

If the character chose an Immortal Patron to guide him during his previous life and he has been faithful to his philosophy, his soul will find a gate leading to the plane of his Immortal Patron. The time spent in Limbo, ranging from a few minutes to several decades, depends on how faithful that character was. The stay in Limbo is meant as a period of atonement. On the Immortal Patron's plane, the soul becomes a servant of the Immortal and cannot be called back to the Prime plane (by a cleric casting a *raise dead* spell, for example) without the Immortal Patron's will. All memory of the Immortals plane is wiped out permanently if this is achieved. No mortal magic can restore memory lost that way.

If the character had adopted an Immortal Patron's philosophy but betrayed it later, that character's soul will not ever be allowed into the Immortal's plane, and it is condemned to remain forever in Limbo. Sooner or later, the lost soul will fall prey to entities of darkness that wander the paths of Limbo. Truly evil souls could fall before the forces of Entropy there and join their side, but they are more likely to become Entropy's prey or the hapless pawn of some grand, evil plot.

A chaotic soul trapped in Limbo may become a Minion of Chaos. It must first become familiar with the peculiarities of Limbo (subtract the character's or monster's level from 40; the result indicates the number of local days a soul needs to "survive" in Limbo to gain this knowledge). If it defeats a Minion of Chaos of the same number of hit dice or better (minimum 10 HD), a Chaotic soul then becomes a Minion itself, the very predator it learned to fear in Limbo.

If the character never adopted any philosophy at all, his soul must go on a quest to find the gate that leads to eternal rest on planes where free souls may reside. These are the entities that mend the fabric of the universe in the Prime or Outer Planes, allow the celestial clock to work, enable the eternal cycle of creation to go on, and maintain the balance between the powers of the spheres.

Simple prayers from those still alive can help a soul lost in Limbo. To someone in Limbo, prayers sound like faint calls from friends. If the prayers are uttered with enough faith, they can lead a soul in the right direction, toward a gate it seeks or away from danger. Many clerics know prayers for the dead, which are particularly effective when said by mourning friends gathered at the side of the deceased or at his grave. Depending on the mourners' background, candles, incense, chimes, songs, Ochalean firecrackers, the toll of a bell, or the sacrifice of gifts, are used to ward off evil spirits (equivalent to a *protection from evil* spell in Limbo) and help the prayers reach the soul beyond. The most effective prayers for the dead were written many centuries ago by the ancient Nithians; these are still in use in the HOLLOW WORLD™ setting.

Other spells cast in the Prime plane can affect lost souls, like *speak with the dead*. To a soul in Limbo, the spell induces a trance that allows the soul to respond to questions (no save). The soul is totally vulnerable during that time and cannot break the trance until it has responded to the cleric's three questions.

Returning home

For a soul to desire its return to the Prime plane, there should be some unbearable need or feeling of distress such that the soul would be ready to risk losing eternal rest in order accomplish a great deed. An epic struggle against evil, a loved one in dire need of help, and revenge for some terrible crime are examples of legitimate reasons to go to the Prime plane.

When confronted with a character's death and entry into Limbo, players will almost always attempt to bring their characters back to life, regardless of the legitimacy of their reasons. Let them. If a player is being frivolous, make his character's path to the Prime plane dangerous and unforgiving. The path to the Prime plane can be a long and difficult one. In the case of a character with a noble quest, some help could be made available in the persons of benevolent entities guiding the lost soul toward a gate.

The wandering soul must face many dangers that could destroy it forever. Creatures of darkness dwelling in Limbo prey upon these lost souls. Gates are well hidden. Malevolent beings also know that lost souls seek these gates to return to their world, and therefore will haunt these places. The more powerful ones, fiends or their Minions in particular, will

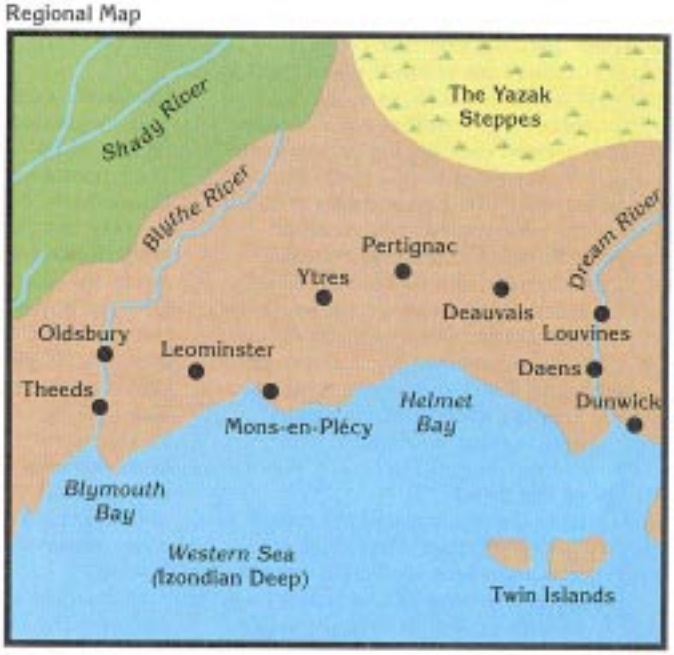


Scale: one hex equals 8 miles

Capital
City
Town
Village
Palace
Castle
Tower
Ruins
Light House
Paved Road
Trail or Shipping Lanes
National Border
Dominion Limit

Farmland
Grasslands
Light Forest
Heavy Forest
Forested Hills
Rocky Hills
Desert
Bog
River
Waterfall
Reefs
Mines
Battle Site

Regional Map



©1992 TSR, Inc.

Cartography by John Knecht

attempt to fool a lost soul into believing they are trying to help. Instead, they will guide the soul to the wrong gate, one that leads to their plane. There the soul will be devoured or imprisoned by creatures of Entropy.

If the soul succeeds in reaching the Prime plane, it will enter at the spot where its body was killed. The soul is *invisible* totally immaterial, and incapable of affecting anything physically or magically in the Prime plane. No one can see it or hear it. The soul must find its body by wandering the region and listening to people. If it finds its body, the soul may immediately enter it and attempt to reanimate it, provided the body is in reasonably good condition. Make a Constitution Check based on the character's original score. If it succeeds, the body is revived. For example, a warrior dies from a stab in the heart, and his soul leaves the body and later returns. Everyone thought the fighter was quite dead (he was), only to discover that the deadly blade just grazed the fighter's heart. He "miraculously" awakes, very weak and in pain but alive.

If the body decayed beyond any possible recovery, was damaged to a point it couldn't conceivably live, or was already disposed of (cremated, buried deep in the ground, etc.), then the soul is in danger of becoming a ghost. Make a Wisdom Check based on the original character's score. If it succeeds, the soul immediately returns to Limbo. If not, it becomes a ghost trapped in the Prime plane (see the description of the ghost in the *Rules Cyclopedia*, page 182).

Souls may be recalled to the Prime plane by powerful clerics. To a soul in Limbo, a *raise dead* spell would produce a great ball of blinding light. The spell in effect creates a magical gate for the soul. It leads it directly to its body, at the time the cleric casts the spell. If it does not desire to return to the Prime plane, the soul must pass a Wisdom Check to resist the call. Sometimes entropic entities will imprison a newly arrived soul, hoping for an unsuspecting cleric to cast such a spell. The entity will enter the gate and take possession of the resurrected body. At other times, a Minion of Chaos might sneak into the gate after the soul. Creatures of Limbo can be jealous of and spiteful toward those who escape Limbo. Clerics should always take heed when summoning a soul back from beyond, for there very well might also be a furtive shadow lurking somewhere near, waiting for its time.

Cities of the dead

Invariably, there are places in Limbo that can be called cities. They offer a neutral ground where souls, followers of Entropy, and creatures of Chaos may meet and dwell without fear of each other. It is rumored that these places are under the protection and law of Immortal Patrons.

As long as one remains in such havens, no harm may befall him *without his own consent*. To say the place is absolutely safe would be far from the truth, however; the only acceptable "currency" there is one's precious lifeforce. Many reasons exist for why a being might want to part with some of its lifeforce; this is usually done for services or information. A Minion of Chaos may bestow upon a weak soul some of its lifeforce in order to obtain its services for a time. A lost soul may accept the loss of some lifeforce in order to gain valuable information on the location of a magical gate. Another might want to pay a rent to "open shop" and sell goods (remember, there is no way to tell how long the reflection of an object will last in Limbo). A fiend may "loan" lifeforce to another entity, at an interest, but the fiend might let the contract run past its deadline and claim its dues back when one is not in any shape to repay. Many souls became the victims of an unscrupulous fiend, either meeting their final doom or becoming followers of Entropy just to survive. Cities crawl with such unsavory creatures.

The trading of lifeforce is vital in Limbo because it often is the only way to cure damage to souls. A soul on a quest to find a gate might sustain great damage in a battle against a creature of Chaos, and thus would want to seek employment in order to cure its wounds. The reflection of money and precious items has little value in Limbo. These are viewed as mere trinkets and baubles.

Lifeforce can be transferred upon contact. For simplicity, lifeforce is measured in hit points. The recipient cannot receive more lifeforce than its normal hit-point total. Lifeforce can be stored in vials and used at a later time like a magical potion. One may refuse to return borrowed lifeforce, but then the protection of the city no longer applies to the delinquent, and his creditor is entitled to take any action it sees fit.

Denizens of Limbo

As mentioned earlier, myriad entities populate Limbo besides the souls of the dead. Because of the preponderance of Chaos there, the "law" of the strongest is the only one that applies. Among the more powerful entities are fiends and their rivals, the Masters of Chaos. Fiends, or Lords of Entropy, are not native to Limbo but consider that plane their hunting grounds. Masters of Chaos are souls that remained in Limbo and rose to power there. Every Minion of Chaos remembers vividly its very first encounter with a fiend or its servants when it first entered Limbo as a lost soul. For this, Minions of Chaos abhor fiends and all other entities of Entropy, especially undead in the service of Entropy.

Undead are abominations that should not normally exist, except that sometimes intense emotions or evil magic interfere with order in the Prime plane. Some undead maintain links with Limbo.

Sentient undead with physical forms (ghouls, wights, mummies, liches) often require souls to be called back to the Prime plane from Limbo and be bound to their corpses. Souls that make it past a gate to eternal rest cannot be called back for the purpose of creating undead. Sentient undead whose souls are capable of traveling Limbo retain their ability to control other undead souls in Limbo, just like on the Prime plane.

Undead without physical forms (wraiths, spectres, haunts, spirits, etc) are perversions of their original souls. This happens in the cases of great sorrow or ultimate evil. Some souls trapped in Limbo for a very long time may turn into these beings and return to the Prime plane many years after their actual deaths.

Most undead have a goal that will allow them to earn eternal rest, sometimes good (ghosts), sometimes evil (spectres). Others hope to break the curse that created them (mummies). Most evil undead are content with spreading evil and sorrow around them (wraiths, nightshades) in revenge for their fate. Others have become insane in their quest for power and knowledge (liches), or in their painful, unbearable hunger for live flesh (ghouls, wights, vampires).

Note that in order for an evil soul to become any of the undead in the following section, the late character must have had at least the same number of HD as the chosen undead form.

Skeletons, zombies: These are the lowest manifestations of evil magic. Someone in the Prime plane simply animated the remains of dead bodies, which does not affect their souls. The souls of the victims of this magic may go on quests for eternal rest.

Ghouls, wights: These creatures exist in the Prime plane due to entropic magic. Ghouls must feed only to ease the pain of hunger; they do not otherwise require food to survive. A wight, however, is far more than a hungry undead. After being killed by a wight, a victim's soul first goes to Limbo. There, it is stalked by the wight's mind, as the wight enters a catatonic trance that allows it to send its own soul after its victim. A wight's soul looks like a dark, frightening shadow straight from the deceased's worse nightmare.

The wight's soul is more powerful in Limbo than in the Prime plane, and it knows many tricks. It can cast the following spells once per visit in Limbo: *hold person*, *phantasmal force*, *web*, *continual darkness*, and *hallucinatory terrain*. It can also enter Limbo within 1d4 miles of its victim. The wight can sense the general direction of its victim. The energy drain ability functions in Limbo. A soul totally drained of its energy is forever destroyed. The wight's soul uses this ability to heal damage on its Prime plane body at the rate of 1d4 hp per hit die drained.

If it catches the hunted soul, the wight can instead bind it to the victim's corpse, thus creating another wight. If the victim's

soul can stay clear of the wight for four Prime plane days (almost seven months in Limbo), the undead will give up the hunt. If the soul defeats the wight, the undead awakens from its trance. It may attempt a trance every night for four nights. The trance lasts 1d4 hours in the Prime plane, at which point the wight's intolerable hunger for flesh awakens it. Destroying the body of a ghoul or wight in the Prime plane also destroys its soul.

Wraiths, spectres: These are the corrupted souls of evil beings whose hatreds drove them to return to the Prime plane. Wraiths usually prefer to haunt an evil place. Spectres, however, often are followers of Entropy sent back to the Prime plane by a fiend to complete a quest.

Wraiths and spectres hate all that lives. Destroying these entities also eradicates their souls. These entities can follow the souls of their victims into Limbo to drain their energy. They possess the same spell abilities in Limbo as the wights. As with wight, energy drain heals any damage inflicted to the entities at the rate of 1d4 hp per drained hit die.

Mummies: A mummy is the result of a curse cast by someone who is already dead and desires revenge on the mummy-to-be. The caster of the curse refused eternal rest and remained in Limbo in order to take its revenge. Nithians were notorious for this sinister practice.

The curse has the power to send a soul eater (see AC9 *Creature Catalogue)* after its victim's soul soon after the latter's arrival in Limbo. The soul eater will stalk the victim until the latter can locate and destroy the caster of the curse. If the soul eater effectively defeats the soul, it will drag it back to the victim's mummified corpse, to which it will be bound.

The curse prevents the soul from ever leaving the body, except for a very specific task that the mummy must accomplish. The mummy might not initially know what the task is. If it is to guard a tomb, it may do so for 1d6 millennia. The hapless being remains in the darkness of its tomb until such time as it can meet the terms of the curse. If the mummy meets its goal, the corpse falls apart and its soul returns to Limbo to seek eternal rest.

If the mummy is destroyed before it achieves its goal, the curse prevents the soul from then earning eternal rest. It must then attempt to return to the Prime plane, again, and seek revenge on those who destroyed its corpse. It returns as a ghost that can cast curses of insanity. Only a *wish* or a *remove curse* spell cast by a 20th-level spell-caster can cure a mummy's curse.

Vampires: The "gift" of vampirism is a magical disease created by an Immortal of Entropy and brought to the Prime plane in an attempt to spread sorrow and destruction. Mortal magic or medicine cannot cure this disease. It prevents the soul of a victim from entering Limbo at the time of death; the soul remains in the corpse to rise again later. When a vampire is destroyed, its soul returns to Limbo to seek eternal rest. Vampires do not always begin as evil creatures, but the agonizing need for fresh blood eventually turns each of them evil or insane at the rate of one day per hit die it has.

Phantoms: Although treated as an undead, the apparition is the reflection in the Prime plane of a Master of Chaos. This is a powerful tool given to Chaos, since it can be used anywhere at any time, without the entity leaving Limbo.

The shade is the undead servant of a fiend. It is the corrupted soul of someone who was captured in Limbo and taken away to the fiend's plane. When destroyed, the shade returns to its evil master's plane.

The vision is an amalgam of the souls of warriors who died on a battlefield and found a way to return to the site. Their emotions were so intense at the time of their death that they couldn't leave the place. Their misdirected angst causes them to attack anyone entering the site, thinking them to be their old enemies. They cannot communicate and go dormant if no one approaches. If the vision is destroyed, these souls return to Limbo to seek eternal rest.

Haunts: The most common manifestation of Limbo on Mystara is the ghost (or banshee, for evil female elves), which was brought up earlier in this article.

Although treated as an undead form, the poltergeist is in truth the extension of a Minion of Chaos. The latter uses it to interact with the Prime plane without traveling there itself, like using a remote-controlled device. By using a poltergeist, a Minion of Chaos may pull objects into Limbo for its own uses. This is a way physical objects from the Prime plane may end up in Limbo. An object's reflection in Limbo, if one already exists there, vanishes from the hands of whatever soul possessed it at the moment the physical object is brought into Limbo. The soul of someone killed by a poltergeist's aging ability is drawn into Limbo where it falls prey to the Minion of Chaos. Poltergeists may be created only on the site of a dramatic death where the link between the Prime plane and Limbo is strong.

Spirits: The druj and the revenant are similar to the ghost in that the soul returned to the body sometime after death. The difference is that the original, evil character was 18th level or higher and his soul may reanimate the corpse even though it has reached an advanced state of decay. The odic is the soul of an evil monster whose body was totally destroyed before the soul's return to the Prime plane. All three spirits travel the Prime plane in search of those (and their descendants) who caused their deaths. Spirit hauntings cease when all legitimate descendants of the original culprit, up to the seventh generation, are dead or insane. These spirits are destroyed when they reach their goal or exceed the time of their quests in the Prime plane.

Nightshades: Very rare on Mystara, these undead are constructs built by fiends to further some grand, evil scheme. Fiends use the souls of shades as the basic element to build nightshades, which are often sent into Limbo to harass the more powerful Masters of Chaos. Because of the distorted time flow in Limbo, however, it is difficult to retrieve nightshades. Finding the right nightshade and determining with accuracy when it would arrive on the other side of a gate is an arcane art that few among Masters of Chaos or Lords of Entropy can master. Nightshades do not control the time distortion that occurs when they leave Limbo to go to another plane.

Liches: Magic is required to create a lich, allowing the soul of the lich-to-be to travel to Limbo where it must accomplish a quest. The object of the quest is usually to gain some form of evil magic or a spell that will bind the soul back to its body and suspend its decay. Depending on the time the lich's soul takes to meet its goals, the body may reach an advanced stage of decay. There have been cases of liches that accomplished their quests quickly enough to prevent major deterioration of their bodies, but as long as a few bones are left, a lich may yet succeed in its scheme. If nothing is left of the body, the lich cannot further its quest and is trapped in Limbo. The lich's quest often requires the destruction of a powerful denizen of Limbo.

Like wights, liches dream and can thus travel Limbo in search of victims to torment and secrets to gain (such as new spells or the location of artifacts). A lich can enter Limbo once per new moon, and it tracks down victims much as a wight does. The souls of liches have the same abilities and game statistics in Limbo as the original monsters, complete with magical weapons (which again are only reflections of the true items). Liches prey on the souls of dead wizards, preferably ancient rivals.

Liches, though able to summon and control undead creatures, are not necessarily followers of Entropy. For this reason and because they are very powerful entities on Limbo, liches sometimes manage to become Minions of Chaos when trapped on that plane. Lichdom often leads to insanity—a symptom of Chaos—although wanting to become a lich in the first place is a clear sign of a sick, evil mind. Lichdom precludes any hope for eternal rest. Destroying a lich in the Prime plane traps its soul in Limbo; destroying its soul in Limbo kills the creature forever.

Minions of Chaos: These chaotic denizens of Limbo were lost souls once and still have the statistics and abilities of the characters or monsters they once were. Each benefits from the ability to *shapechange* (with the ability to cast spells, if any are possessed, in whatever

shape they choose), *dimension door* at will, and use *alter reality* The latter power can't be used to affect a victim directly, affecting only its perceptions, and it is limited to a sphere with a diameter equal to 1' per hit die of the Minion. The alteration can be centered as far away as 10' per hit die of the Minion. A Minion can use *alter reality* only in Limbo, once per round, independent of anything else it does during that time.

The difference between *phantasmal force* and *alter reality* is that if the victim fails an Intelligence check, the alteration (so long as it is of a nonliving thing) becomes real. For example, if the victim struck a Minion of Chaos a damaging blow, the Minion could respond by showing his wounds healing instantaneously (using *alter reality)*. On the other hand, the Minion could not cause a bridge to melt away under the victim's feet, sinking him into bubbling lava, but it could create this illusion *near* the victim to prevent the victim from fleeing. This power is negated for the remainder of an encounter the first time the victim succeeds in his Intelligence check. If several foes are present, use the highest Intelligence score in the party for the roll, with a + 1 bonus.

The Minion can use this ability to shape its surroundings, create nonmagical, nonliving objects, and build itself a lair in Limbo's wilderness or cities. The durability of such dwellings is largely based upon its builder's notoriety among Minions of Chaos, who will attack at any chance. A lone Minion always succeeds in using *alter reality*.

A Minion of Chaos can survive no more than an hour per hit die in the Prime plane. It has the ability to follow someone through a gate and appear at the same time in the Prime plane, despite the time distortion in Limbo. The Minion can freely return to Limbo anytime it wishes.

A Minion of Chaos can also create poltergeists. Each poltergeist it creates temporarily reduces the Minion's hit points by 10%, rounded up (or by 5 hp, whichever is greater). If the poltergeist is destroyed in the Prime plane, those hit points are recovered.

Creatures capable of earning levels of experience (the lost souls of player characters, for example) may resume their quest for higher levels in Limbo if they become Minions of Chaos, using their original experience tables. A Minion of Chaos may become a Master of Chaos if it destroys a Master in combat.

Note that a creature of Chaos can "heal" damage caused to it by feeding on lost souls. The more hit dice or levels a soul had, the more damage is healed, at a rate of 1 hp per hit die or level devoured. Creatures of Chaos are fiercely competitive and aren't known to form alliances. Coercion and fear are the only motivations for any such creature to obey another.

Masters of Chaos: These powerful rulers of Limbo have all of the abilities available to their Minions, with several differences. Each has an anti-magic resistance equal to its hit dice, the power to cast *telekinesis* and ***ESP*** at will, and the power to cast *confusion*, *reverse gravity*, and *maze* once per encounter. It exudes a 30'-radius aura of Chaos that temporarily reduces the Intelligence scores of all creatures caught in the aura by one-half, rounded down (save vs. spell). This aura affects only creatures of fewer hit dice than the Master itself. Its ability to *alter reality* affects a sphere 10 times bigger and at 10 times the range of the normal spell. A natural 1 on an Intelligence Check is needed to knock out a Master's *alter reality* power in an encounter.

A Master of Chaos can open a gate to the Prime plane, but only once each time it senses a soul escaping Limbo (a one-mile radius per hit die). The gate leads to an area in the Prime plane located 1d4 miles away from the location of the soul. As with the souls of wights in Limbo, a Master of Chaos can sense the general direction of a runaway soul. It can survive in the Prime plane up to one day per hit die. Its *alter reality* power works on the Prime plane, too.

Masters of Chaos can create ½-HD creatures of Chaos called *discords* (AC 7; MV 30'(10'), 180'(60') flying; AT *alter reality* as a 3 HD Minion; Dmg none; Save MU1; ML 6; TT none; Int 8; AL Chaotic; XP 7). Each of these small winged eyes cost their creator 1 hp, recoverable only when the discord is destroyed. Discords act as the eyes and ears of their creators, with whom they remain in telepathic contact.

For the same cost as a making poltergeist, a Master of Chaos can also create an apparition in the Prime plane, using it to seek information or revenge. The apparition has a mind of its own, which frees the Master of Chaos from having to concentrate in order to control it. The Master does have the option to see, listen, and control the apparition at will from Limbo. The apparition dissipates upon returning to its master.

Visitors: Other creatures may wander through Limbo, such as spectral hounds, undead beholders, and other undead variants. Fortunately, not all that dwells in Limbo is evil. Some friendly entities exist and may bring help, such as lawful souls on their way to eternal rest, or guardian angels (see next entry). The archon is perhaps one of the most powerful creature at the service of good that could roam Limbo. It enters Limbo to monitor the schemes of the Masters of Chaos there, or to keep the Masters under control (see the *Rules Cyclopedia*, page 158).

Beyond Limbo

Characters reaching "eternal rest" past Limbo are still playable. They could become servants of their chosen Immortals, or free entities in a separate plane. In either case, their goals could be very similar to those they had when alive in the Prime plane, in that they continue their struggle against the enemy (presumably Entropy), either defending their home plane against their foes or returning regularly to the Prime plane as "guardian angels" to protect their philosophy.

A guardian angel permanently loses 1d6 HD when destroyed or defeated in the Prime plane, and it immediately returns to its home plane for 1d8 days thereafter. If "killed" on its home plane, a guardian angel is permanently removed from the game. The guardian angel gains experience levels as appropriate to its mission and original character class, and it may continue its quest for immortality if it wishes.

The guardian angel has the original character's game statistics and abilities. The guardian angel's incorporeal form is *invisible* in the Prime plane (infravision cannot reveal an incorporeal guardian angel). It can freely materialize, thus becoming visible. In either form, only spells or magical weapons of +2 or greater power can affect it. The guardian angel may cast up to three *travel* spells a day as an innate ability. The guardian angel cannot take away any material objects from the Prime plane. Guardian angels should not deliberately interact with other creatures in the Prime plane; stiff experience penalties threaten those who do.

So, if everyone in a party dies during a game, there's no need to crumple up those precious character sheets. Favorite characters might yet remain companions of fortune in Limbo, on a quest for mysterious adventures in the worlds beyond. Good haunting! Ω



Colorful Connection:
the solution
(puzzle on page 34)





CHRIS HARVEY GAMES



It's Spring??

DON'T LET THE SEASON FOOL YOU

It's still time to get all the games you've been promising yourself... Just because the seasons are changing is no reason to ignore the important things in life. Don't fritter your money away on non-essentials like food, clothing and a roof over your head①. No games still leaves Neighbours as the high spot on TV②. It's your choice but if you want a good year and you know that you deserve it then get out there... head for one of the shops listed below③ and treat yourself before it's too late. Remember, we all deserve good games... especially you!

① OK, you'd probably better go for the food as well. ② ...and you haven't got Twin Peaks any more. ③ or any other good games shop...

Orient Express • Teenagers From Outer Space • Rolemaster • MegaTraveller Cosmic Encounter • Supremacy™ • Ogre/GEV • Battletech • Champions • Moves Runequest™ • Car Wars® • Ghostbusters® International • F&M • Star Wars® • Paint Ars Magica • Cyberpunk 2020 • Timelords • DC Heroes • Tunnels&Trolls • TORG Living Steel • The Morrow Project • Star Fleet Battles • CyberSpace • Nightcity Eurorails • Middle Earth Role Playing® • Chill • Prisoner • Nightlife • Dark Conspiracy Twilight 2000:2nd edition • Ranger • GURPS • Space Gods • MechWarrior • Rifts Watchmen Sourcebook • Tanks • Command • Blue Max • Star Warriors • Illuminati Imperium Romanum • EPT • Dark Space • Vampires • The Lurking Fear • Har Edge On • Blue Max • SpaceMaster • Beyond The Supernatural • Year of the Phoenix Minas Tirith • Call of Cthulhu • 2300 AD • Harpoon • Batman RPG • Shadow World Challenge • Battlefield: Europe • Awful Green Things From Outer Space • Justifiers

Outer Limits 4 The Broadway **Bedford** MK40 2TH (0234) 58581	**Kard Bar** Cross Street off Westgate Road **Newcastle-upon-Tyne** (091) 232 8688	**Lancaster Roleplaying Game Centre** 33North Road **Lancaster** LA1 1NS (0524) 382181	**RP Games Warehouse & Graphic Books** 44 Westport **Dundee** DD1 5ER (0382) 204209	**Travelling Man** 23 Headingley Lane **Headingley** Leeds LS6 1BL (0532) 780417	**Sheffield Space Centre** 33 The Wicker **Sheffield** S3 8HS (0742) 758905	**The Little Shop** 12 Conway Street **St. Helier** CI (0534) 32187
The Dragon's Hoard 12 Vauxhall Street **St. Helier** Jersey	**Computer & Games Centre** 34 St. Nicholas Cliff **Scarborough** YO11 2ES (0723) 500505	**The Dragon's Lair** 17 St. George's Street **Stamford** Lincs, PE9 2BJ (0780) 57622	**Tower Models** 44 Cookston Street **Blackpool** FY1 3ED (0253) 23797	**Trivial Book Shop** (inc. Mail Order) Marienstr. 3 **3000 Hanover** W.Germany (0511)329097	**War & Peace** 8 Upper Orwell Street **Ipswich** IP4 1NN (0473) 258356	**Games Room** 29a Elm Hill **Norwich** (0603) 628140
The Model Shop 190-194 Station Road **Harrow** (081) 863 9788	**Fantasy World** 10 Market Square Arcade Hanley, Stoke-On-Trent Staffs, ST1 1NU (0782) 279294	**Games & Puzzles** 6 Green Street **Cambridge** CB2 3JU (0223) 355188	**Role & Play,** (M&M Games) 19 Broad Street **Wolverhampton** (0902) 310027 ALSO Mail Order	**The Game Drain** 8 Oldham Road **Ashton-Under-Lyme** Lancs OL6 7ND (061) 343 5875	**Warlord Games Shop** 818 London Road **Leigh-On-Sea** Southend SS9 3NH (0702) 73308	**Swansea Models & Hobbies** 30 Oxford Street **Swansea** SA1 3AN (0792) 652877
Game Inc. 9 Frankfurt Gate **Plymouth** PL1 1QA (0752) 672149	**Pastimes** 15 East Street Centre **Southampton** SO1 1HX (0703) 221789	**The Stamp Corner** 75 Netherhall Road **Doncaster** Yorkshire (0302) 323623	**Another World** 23 Silver Street **Leicester** LE1 5EU (0533) 515266	**Another World** 11 Market Street **Nottingham** (0602) 484122	**R.P. Games,** PO BOX 10 **Brownhills** Walsall WS8 7PQ Mail Order ONLY	**Spirit Games** 98 Station Street **Burton-On-Trent** Staffs (0283) 511293
The Model Shop 209 Deansgate **Manchester** M3 3NN (061) 834 3972	**Westgate Games** 91 St. Dunstans Street **Canterbury** CT2 8AD (0227) 457257	**Alien Encounters** 5 The Quadrant, Bridge Street **Guildford**, Surrey (0483) 304781	**J & B Small** 43 Darlaston Road Pleck, **Walsall** W.Midlands WS2 9QT (0922) 22338	**The Gameskeeper** 105 Cowley Road **Oxford** OX4 1HU (0865) 721348	**Games Store** 9 Maritime Terrace **Sunderland** Town Centre (091) 510 8142	**Abbatt Toys** 45 St.Peters Gate **Stockport**, Cheshire SK1 1DH (061) 480 7665
Trains & Things 170/172 Chorley New Road, **Horwich** Bolton BL6 5QW	**Peterborough Role Games,** 135 Dogsthorpe Road **Peterborough** PE1 3AJ (0733) 312568	**Stationery & Games** 4 The Crescent East **Cleveleys**, Blackpool Lancs, FY5 1LJ (0253) 855511	**Swinton Models & Hobbies**,207 Chorley Rd Swinton **Manchester** M27 2AZ (061) 727 8151	**Thunderbooks II** 116 Friargate **Preston** Lancs, PR1 2EE (0772) 204287	**Medway Games Cntr** 294-6 High Street **Chatham** Kent ME4 4NR (0634) 814750	**Not Just Stamps** 17-19 Crendon Street **High Wycombe** Bucks HP13 6LJ (0494) 441717
A.Watts & Sons Ltd 80 Abingdon Street **Northampton** NN1 2BB (0604) 21809	**Krackers Games Shop** 5 Bath Place Taunton **Somerset** TA1 4ER (0823) 335057	**Krackers Games Shop** 1-5 Fore Street Centre Fore Street **Exeter** Devon	**BEATTIES**	**Alternate Earths** Unit 107, Lower Galleries, Eastgate Shopping Centre, **Basildon** Essex	**Alternate Earths II** 7 Talza Way Basement Victoria Circus Centre **Southend-On-Sea**	**Mac's Models** 133-135 Canongate Royal Mile **Edinburgh** EH8 8BP (031) 557 5551

ALL GOOD GAMES SHOPS



TRADE ENQUIRIES ONLY
CHRIS HARVEY GAMES, PO Box 38, Bath Street, Walsall WS1 3BY
FAX: 0922 721644



Your Own Treasure Hunt

©1992 by Robin Rist

Cast a *raise funds* spell on your gaming club

Treasure means a lot. Most characters in a fantasy role-playing adventure hope to find lots of money, gems, and magical riches, all the things that make the adventure worthwhile. They'll fight hordes of hobgoblins or a vampire to get them. But once in a while, after all the bruises, cuts, and deaths have been taken, the party will anxiously open a treasure chest only to find that it is empty. This can make the party's feeling of victory seem hollow.

When gaming clubs, small or large, attempt to earn money to attend certain activities or to buy new games or supplements, they often fall short. Disappointment results, and the enthusiasm needed for fund-raising activities is lost. I'm a member of a small college gaming club myself, and listed below are some steps to take that might help your gaming club's fund-raisers be successful.

1. Decide on your goals. If your club plans to go to a convention, buy gaming supplies, or get a guest speaker, you must estimate how much money this will require. Sometimes you'll want to set your estimated costs higher than they actually are to ensure that you'll have enough money for all planned activities and some of the unexpected ones. Once your club's goals have been set, you can start the planning.

2. Brainstorming. Initial ideas for fund-raisers should be considered now. Write down all suggestions, because more than one of them could prove beneficial in, the future. After recording the suggestions, discuss each idea individually. This could take a little time, so be prepared. You should consider the time of year and what activities other gaming clubs and civic groups are doing; for example, you do not want to have a car wash in the dead of winter. If another club is doing a similar activity, you might want to use that suggestion at a later time.

3. Choose a project that members can agree on. Some people never seem to agree on anything, much less reach a consensus, but try to be democratic and vote on each idea. If this doesn't work,



threatening to kill a few characters in an ongoing campaign might bring about some cooperation.

4. Select a coordinator for the project. Now comes the hard part: finding people to do the work. People are often willing to help but are not willing to take charge of a project. A lot of coaxing may be needed, and picking somebody you know to be responsible is usually the best bet. You shouldn't choose a member who is habitually late or absent, or whom other people don't trust to handle money.

Once someone has been selected, his first step is to get other members to help him and to assign tasks to each one. By doing this, no one will have to take all the responsibility, and objectives will be reached more quickly. Otherwise, it would be like a fighter in an adventuring campaign trying to kill the monsters by himself, while the rest of the party sits back and watches. Sooner or later, that fighter is going to become very tired and maybe very badly hurt, thus dooming the whole party. That's the way it is with fund-raisers if one person takes on responsibility for everything; something is destined to go wrong and maybe ruin all chances of earning money. Remember that the project coordinator isn't the only worker on the project; he's just the person who makes sure that the other workers are doing their part.

5. Allow plenty of preparation time. One of the biggest problems I've had in my club is not having enough time to prepare for the activity we wanted to do. Planning only a few days before the event does not work. To have a successful fund-raiser, people must have enough time to accomplish their tasks. For example, if your club decides to have a dance, a couple of months of preparation would be a minimum amount of time needed to plan and arrange all that is necessary. On the other hand, if your club is doing a car wash, only a couple of weeks would be needed. It is better to have more time than is needed rather than not having enough time. When rushed, certain aspects of the activity could turn out poorly, and the

whole organization of the event may crumble; it's like being charged by a tribe of orcs and not giving your mage enough time to cast his *fireball* spell.

6. Determine what is necessary to complete the activity. Knowing what the costs will be for your club to complete a project, and decide what equipment, if any, is necessary. Will you need to rent a place for your activity to take place? Most college clubs have buildings available for use or have equipment you might need. Often, players have items of their own that are necessary for an activity (like a stereo for a dance) or know how to get it at a lower cost. Sometimes gaming and hobby stores will sponsor your club or help out in other ways. These are all options to keep in mind. The less money your club has to spend for an activity, the more money you can earn for the club. If you do not know what is necessary to complete an activity, talk with other clubs or people who have done similar activities. Without knowing which direction to go, your club will only go in circles.

7. Have check-up meetings. Just because you assigned people certain tasks does not mean that those tasks will always get done. Sometimes people have trouble getting started, run into dead ends, get confused, or aren't motivated. Having periodic meetings along the way makes it possible for those involved to bounce ideas off each other, relate how they are doing, or discuss problems that have evolved.

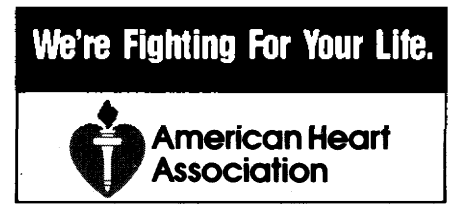
If you don't do this, you could easily have an incident like the following: A member of the planning committee has a problem that he doesn't know how to solve, and he doesn't want to ask for help because that would make him feel stupid. The job then doesn't get done. Later on, usually when the activity is underway, the part of the project that person was working on arises and he says, "I had a problem and I didn't manage to do it. Sorry." By this time, it is too late. Imagine an adventuring party camping out in the middle of the woods for the night. Wood has been gathered, a fire is lit, and everyone looks at the character who was supposed to have acquired the food in town—and he says, "Sorry, I forgot." In real life, hard feelings could arise toward the person who did not complete his responsibility, and other problems might stem from this. With check-up meetings, the chances of this happening are drastically cut if not totally eliminated.

8. Publicity. Whether by word of mouth, an ad in the newspaper, an ad in a gaming magazine, or even a flyer posted in the local hobby shop, publicity is very important. If people do not know about your activity, how are they supposed to attend? Remember, for most people it takes more than one exposure to something new before they remember it, and that's why ads for products are repeated so often.

You want people to know about your club activity at least a week ahead of the activity's time. For example, if you were using flyers, the time to circulate them would be a week before the designated date. A couple of days later, circulate a few more flyers. Then the day before, as well as the day of the activity, pass out even more flyers. A good way of letting people know is by hanging flyers up where they are most likely to be seen. Some good places might be a local grocery store, gaming store, student union (if you have a college club), around school, and on cars. If your club does hang flyers them in businesses, be sure to ask the manager or owner of the business first, or your flyer might not stay up for long. People need to know about your event, and the word won't get out unless you spread it.

9. Make sure there are enough people to work the activity. The people who do all the planning for the fund-raiser shouldn't be the only ones who work at it. If that happens, those members could become burned out on future fund-raising ideas, or they may develop some negative feelings about the club itself. Find a way to get everybody involved. Maybe you could hold a pizza party for those who work the fund-raiser or some other activity. You could also tell the people who do not help that they may be excluded from whatever benefits are gained by spending the money raised by the event. Whatever route your club takes, just make sure you're not short-handed. Having too few workers causes stress for those who are working and may make the fund-raiser less successful. Also, tempers flare more often under stressful situations, and workers may take it out on each other instead of working together.

With this step-by-step process, your gaming club should be successful in raising funds. After your first few fund-raisers, this process will get even easier. This has proven true for my club, at least. No longer will you have to look at a treasure chest that is continually empty. Instead, you will have one that is full enough to suit your gaming club's needs. Ω





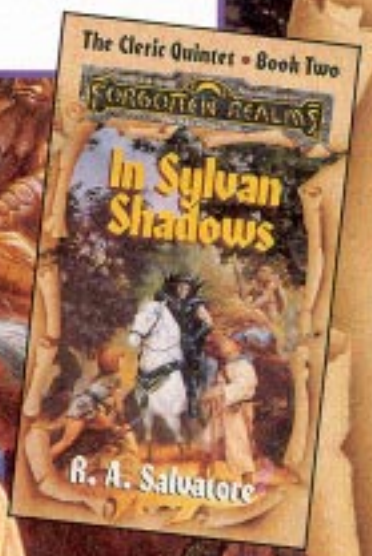
"Well, it appears they have the element of surprise."

FORGOTTEN REALMS®
FANTASY ADVENTURE

The Chaos Curse Is Only the Beginning

Cadderly, the Edificant Library's eccentric young scholar-priest, and his friends must save the inhabitants of the beautiful elven forest, Shilmista, where a new opponent leads an army of vile monsters. Not even Cadderly's powerful companions can insulate him from the trials of character and courage he must face.

In Sylvan Shadows, book two of the Cleric Quintet, is by *New York Times* best-selling author R. A. Salvatore. Look for it in book and hobby stores everywhere!



FORGOTTEN REALMS is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc.
The TSR logo is a trademark owned by TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

BUCK ROGERS

MATRIX CUBED

SCIENCE FICTION ROLE-PLAYING COMPUTER GAME, VOL. II

Matrix Cubed picks up where SSI's popular *Countdown to Doomsday* leaves off — *and keeps on going!* A much bigger universe means much more to explore — including, *for the very first time,* Jupiter! And, with nearly twice as many new and different monsters, combat is fast, furious, and futuristic!

Role-playing in space has *never* been this good! *Matrix Cubed* uses an enhanced version of SSI's award-winning *AD&D* gold box computer fantasy role-playing game system. That means serious role-playing — your characters gain levels *and* skills as they explore the vast, complex and dangerous universe of the 25th century.

Aided by higher character levels and better equipment, you and your team must scour the solar system and rescue scientists who can build the Matrix Device. This machine can transform any substance into pure energy, and is the only hope left for the devastated and enslaved Earth!



Transfer characters from Countdown to Doomsday or create new ones. Either way, your team will meet friends and enemies from the last adventure as a new quest unfolds....



Engage in tactical combat on the surface of Venus. Will your plasma throwers, laser pistols and grenades be enough?

IBM • AMIGA
Clue Book available!

Matrix Cubed – Sci-fi role-playing adventure has *never* been this good!

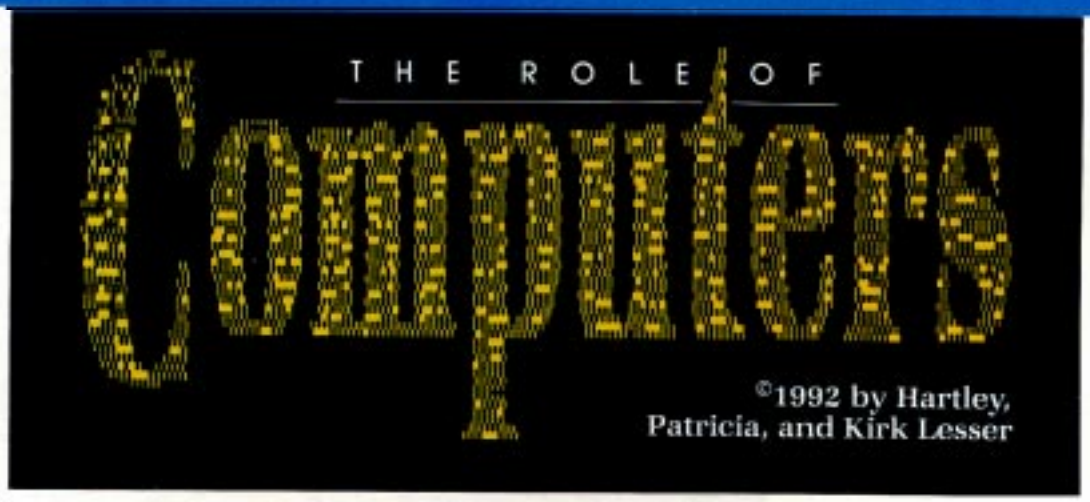
TO ORDER BY VISA/MC: call 1-800-245-4525 (in USA & Canada). To receive SSI's complete product catalog, send $1.00 to: SSI, 675 Almanor Avenue, Suite 201, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

Screens shown: *IBM 256-color VGA displays.*

BUCK ROGERS and TSR are trademarks used under license from The TSR Family Trust. ©1990 The TSR Family Trust. ©1990 Strategic Simulations, Inc. ©1990 TSR, Inc. All rights reserved. ADⅇD and the TSR logo are trademarks owned by and used under license from TSR, Inc.

SSI

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS, INC.





Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus (Accolade)

Elvira needs help with an uninvited guest—namely, Death

Once again, we'd like to thank everyone who has written to us with comments, hints, and tips. It is quite obvious that DRAGON® Magazine readers are highly dedicated gamers. We enjoy reading your letters and are especially thankful to those who help out their fellow gamers with new ideas for getting through the rough spots in computer games.

We have been thinking about how fair our Beastie Awards voting is to the various entertainment software companies. Our conclusion is that awards based upon reader votes really aren't a fair proposition for many such companies. Sometimes, games are purchased because of expensively rendered, point-of-purchase displays or advertising campaigns in magazines rather than the quality of the games themselves. Many small companies that don't have the budgets to wage advertising campaigns just can't compete for attention other than through reviews. The smaller companies' games might be just as good as the larger companies' games, but the former don't receive the attention they deserve.

Computer games' ratings	
X	Not recommended
*	Poor
**	Fair
***	Good
****	Excellent
*****	Superb

Our feeling, then, is that a popular vote is too inequitable to be an accurate judge of a game's true worth. We would like to eradicate the Beastie Awards as a popular vote. Instead, we would prefer our readers let us know how they feel about the games we've reviewed; we'll publish fair, applicable comments. If we haven't reviewed a particular game you'd like to see, tell us about that game in four paragraphs or less.

As we simply don't have the space to write about every game we receive, be assured that most games appearing in this column possess high merit as playable, valuable entertainment for you. The rating structure will remain. Occasionally there are games that show up that are simply so

bad that we have to warn gamers away from them. Thank heavens such offerings are in the minority!

Whenever possible, game hints published here will now list the computer system for which they are applicable, as many tips simply do not work on all systems. When you write in with a tip, please mention the computer system upon which you played your game. Thanks!

KnightLine

Did you know that Atari Corporation has just sold its one-millionth game cartridge for the Lynx hand-held video-game system? With a current library of 40 games, the company expects to have 75 titles by the end of 1992.

Had problems with *Falcon 3.0*, PC/MS-DOS version? Spectrum HoloByte has released a new patch disk to take care of such matters. If you need this patch, call customer support at (510) 522-1164.

For video gamers, NEC has announced it is releasing a new system incorporating both CD-ROM and 16-bit game machines in a single unit. You can expect to see it in retail stores this summer.

H.E.L.P.

Marty Gleason, of Countryside, Ill., needs some assistance. "I have a Macintosh LC, and the first game I purchased was *The Bard's Tale*. Now I'm stuck. I can't answer the riddle in Harkyn's Castle, the silver square in Harkyn's Castle, and I cannot find Kylearan in his tower. My characters are all over level 20, and the game is driving me crazy!"

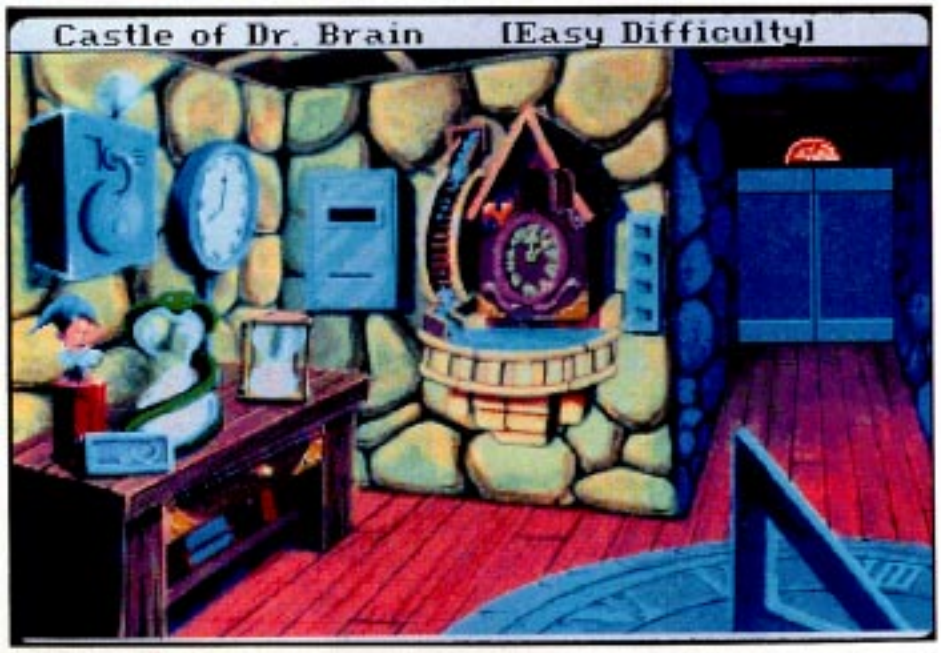
Joshua Marquart of Hauppauge, N.Y., would like some assistance with *Autoduel* from Origin. "Can you increase your health and body armor from three and a total of six to a greater number? What is the full password to 'She sells . . .?' What is the best car to purchase, and which is the hardest division to play in, Five or Twenty (don't count unlimited)? How can a car qualify for these divisions?"

David Crowe of Scottsdale, Ariz., asks, "I am having a problem solving *BattleTech: The Crescent Hawk's Inception*. I am in the Star League Map Room and have the map that comes with the game, but I am unable to determine what is the correct combination of planets to touch in order to finish the game. Please help!"

Thexder 2 is stumping Bob Gibson of Raleigh, North Carolina. "I'm stuck in Firehawk (a.k.a. Thexder 2) running on an IBM. I'm at Level Nine and am unable to get past the guardian at the end of the level, Does anyone have any suggestions?"

From Georgia comes a *Faery Tale Adventure* request from Jeffrey Hadsock. "I have found the Citadel of Doom but I cannot seem to get into it. I could sure use a hint for this!"

Ultima VI experts should readily know the answer to Ryan Wongvitaras's call for help, "What does the statue in the Shrine of Control do by gaining control of more people?"



Castle of Dr. Brain (Sierra On-Line)

Bill Wilson of Traverse City, Mich., has a couple of questions regarding Dragon Wars, played on a Commodore 64. "Has anyone found a use for driftwood, flotsam, or bones? Also, has anyone found scrolls for Light Flash, Summon Salamander, Brambles, Invoke Spirit, Prison, or both Rage and Wrath of Mithas?"

Jason Dunn required help in a previous issue with *Ultima VI*. Mike Myers of La Mesa, Calif., has heard Jason's call and responds, "To find the Mantra of Diligence from the stairs, go down two rooms, then over one room, and look for a secret door. Go down the stairway. You may find it easier to get past the daemons by using invisibility. Also, if you have solved the game and are playing again, skip the pirate cave. Just get the moonstones, then the codex. If you are looking for the pirate cave, it may be useful to know that Lord Witsaber's name is really Alastor Gordon."

Reviews

Castles: The Northern Campaign *****
Interplay
PC/MS-DOS version $29.95

This disk is the company's *Castles* Campaign Disk #1. *The Northern Campaign* makes the original game a far better offering. Not only does it expand the reaches of your kingdom, but it adds features not released in the original game. For example, you can now train your infantry and archers, who rate from poor to elite. Believe us, when you have several hundred elite forces under your command, few can better them in battle except through sheer force of numbers. You can counteract superior forces by ensuring that you have enough castles built to enable you to raise more military might, It costs money to train your people, however.

You can also buy and sell land, wine, grain, and wool. When you wish to engage in trading commodities, you'll note that the specific item is either poor, average, or good in production. The higher the production quality, the higher the price, whether selling or buying. Buy enough land and you can even award acreage to subjects. You can confiscate lands as well.

One new aspect that we found really helpful is the ability to loan money as well as to borrow funds. The former enables you to earn interest, We tried to make certain that each month we loaned the maximum amount available to ensure great rewards at the start of the new year. With taxes barely supporting our castle-building efforts and military buildups, the interest payments came in very handy in ensuring a more stable financial position. If things get rough monetarily, you can always borrow funds—but, just as you extract interest from those who borrow from you, the reverse is also applicable.

In combat, your infantry troops now do not head into the fray until you click on each icon with your mouse cursor. This enables you to determine if an offensive or defensive maneuver is better for the particular encounter.

You can also select either a realistic or fantasy world. We thought the latter was more fun, as you never really knew what was causing the gray, sticky substance to stick to your castle walls. The messengers who arrive for an audience (you can retain the original messengers or use the new ones included with this disk) are a varied lot, ranging from trusted advisors to a motley assortment of wizards, hags, and merchants. Everything is quite interesting, and the subplots are most intriguing.

If you own *Castles*, you must purchase this campaign disk. (A Macintosh version should be available now.) *Castles*, with the addition of this disk, is now definitely a



Elvira II (Accolade)

five-star entertainment. It supports CGA, EGA, and MCGA/VGA, as well as AdLib, Roland, Innovation, SoundBlaster, and Tandy sound equipment.

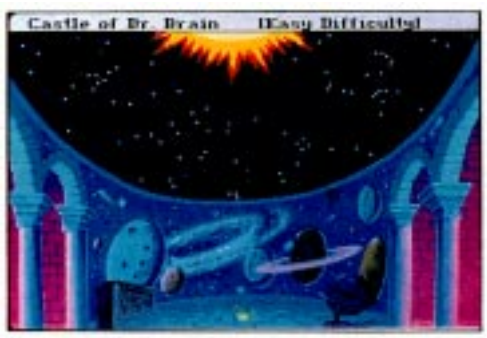
Castle of Dr. Brain ****
Sierra On-Line
PC/MS-DOS version $49.95

You are an applicant for the position of Dr. Brain's lab assistant. In order to get this job, you must successfully get through Brain's castle—but there are no monsters to destroy or traps to overcome. This game consists of mental challenges that must be completed in order to finish the game. *Castle of Dr. Brain* (CDB) uses the latest icon system seen in most of Sierra's games. By clicking the appropriate icon over an object, you can pick up that object, look at it, or use it.

In CDB, you must "complete" a room in the house before you can continue. Each room has a different theme and contains from one to four puzzles. By clicking on a door, a computer, or an object in the room, you'll find the challenge that awaits you. The obstacles include completing a jigsaw puzzle, playing Hangman, solving a crypt code, finishing arithmetic, and using logic. Completing the puzzle gives you access to a code or key that allows you to move on in the game. Instructions are provided with each puzzle; if you become hopelessly lost, hint coins enable you to solve a portion of the puzzle or obtain a clue as to how to complete the problem. Hint coins are not readily available. You receive one only after solving a new puzzle. Also, the more coins you have at the end of the game, the higher your total score.

While CDB was created for younger audiences, adults can try the puzzles at one of three difficulty levels. While hard, the game is not too complex; we were able to complete CDB using its standard level in about five hours. Adults may find a greater challenge in Chris Crawford's *The Fool's Errand* or *Three in Three* from Inline Design.

CDB is a great game for youngsters and helps them learn about math, astronomy, programming, and logic. The graphics and animation are clear and crisp, and the sound is good. The one criticism of the game we have is its short ending. You receive a few congratulatory statements and a list of credits, then CDB advertises its upcoming sequel. We thought the ending could have been a bit more rewarding, especially for youngsters who committed a lot of time and hard work into completing the puzzles. Otherwise, CDB is a recommended purchase for young people and their parents who enjoying playing games together. It supports VGA and Soundblaster equipment.



Castle of Dr. Brain (Sierra on line)

Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus *****
Accolade
PC/MS-DOS version $69.95



Elvira II (Accolade)

We haven't had this much fun with a graphic adventure since *Monkey Island* from Lucasfilm Games. Throw in less humor and a lot more blood than the Lucasfilm game, with a damsel (Elvira) in distress, and you've got a terrific adventure.

This sequel to Accolade's *Elvira* sports an improved user interface, extremely colorful and dynamic graphics, and a soundtrack to suit whatever room you occupy. We delighted in our Roland sound system's music throughout this adventure.

Elvira has been kidnapped from Black Widow Productions, and all kinds of evil creatures and horrendous beasties are crawling around three sets within the confines of her studio. It's up to you to find her. This is not a cake walk. *Elvira II* is filled with extremely scintillating puzzles. Elvira's image will appear now and then (much to your joy) and offer some form of sarcastic advice—listen and learn.

If there is any one problem, it is that there is so much to consider when adventuring through the 4,000 or so locations that fill this adventure. You must learn exactly what you need to take and what you should leave behind. The number of retrievable objects is impressive. Too bad you've got a strength limit that affects your inventory.

Since some spells require some form of reagent, you have to determine if this cupcake or that gum is a required element for a particular spell. The only way you can determine an object's magical use in creating a spell is to click on the Spellbook icon in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. A second window appears, within which are spell listings. You click on a needed spell, and that spell's description is revealed, as well as the ingredients required to make it. If you happen to have the proper ingredients in your inventory, you use your mouse and click on the object, dragging it into the mixing page. Then click on the Mix icon at the top left of this window, and you'll note that the spell appears in your inventory.

There are dozens of spells. Some can be used but once, while others have multiple uses. It's up to you to find the correct ingredients. Thankfully, some spells don't require any materials other than your desire to create them.

If you want to fight, you'll have plenty of chances. The opponent appears in the main window, battling you in real time. The foe swings at you, and you swing at it. Since the beasties all have different areas of vulnerability, aim your weapon accordingly.

We have yet to complete this adventure, which is truly engrossing, exciting, and jam-packed with horror! From the opening screens, you'll be on the edge of your seat trying to rescue the beloved Elvira. This is a "must" purchase! It supports VGA graphics and AdLib, Roland, or SoundBlaster sound equipment.

Hyperspeed ****
MicroProse Software
PC/MS-DOS version $59.95

This would have been a five-star game had not Origin previously released both *Wing Commander* and *Wing Commander II. Hyperspeed* is a well-conceived space-combat and role-playing game, but its graphics lack the movielike quality of Origin's games. However, when you consider this game's lower price, its support for a wide variety of graphics cards, and its high playability, it becomes a fine alternative, presenting an entire galaxy at your fingertips.

The object is to locate a suitable home for mankind. Our years of living on Earth have made it nearly uninhabitable, and only by using starships to search the universe will humanity's future be secured. You'll encounter a wide variety of aliens and their technology, some friendly to your cause and others totally hostile. It's up to you not only to find a new home for all mankind, but also to eliminate hostile aliens or to arrange peace treaties with them to allow the habitation of new worlds.

Your starship is an amazing vessel. With a wide variety of weapons, including fighters and an effective kamikaze attack, you can ultimately learn how to defeat your enemies. Only through long and arduous talks with various aliens will you learn of other races' weaknesses, and only through long and arduous trading will you acquire the necessary equipment sets to further enhance your military might.

There are four star clusters to explore, each one more difficult than the one preceding it. Using a combination of joy stick and keyboard commands, we soon learned the interface and found ourselves mixed up in some pretty strange intergalactic relationships. One race would offer to help, but only if we rid the galaxy of another race. Considering the strength of the aliens we were supposed to take out, it's no wonder our initial forays met with disaster!

A well-written manual guides you through a tutorial encounter before you're on your own. We definitely recommend reading the entire manual before play; various strategies are explained, and we can attest to their accuracy in helping us defeat some pretty serious opposition.

No, this isn't as good as *Wing Commander*, but for thousands of gamers it will provide hours of entertainment without the need to purchase a new VGA card or Roland sound board. This game is worth every nickel of its retail price if you enjoy space combat and exploration. It supports CGA, EGA, and VGA/MCGA graphics, with Roland, SoundBlaster, AdLib, Tandy, or IBM sound equipment.



Nova 9 (Dynamix)

Nova 9 **** ½
Dynamix, distributed by Sierra
PC/MS-DOS version $34.95

Dynamix always seems to come up with a winner; even its manuals are top notch. So, what do you expect this sequel to the company's smash hit *Stellar 7* to be? It's very good, the animation and scrolling are smooth, the graphics are as fully three-dimensional as is possible with current consumer-level technology (although not quite on a par with Origin's *Wing Commander II*), and the sound through our Roland systems was an exciting enhancement to the game's overall feel and play.

Nova 9 is a tremendous, well-coded, futuristic battle arcade game wherein you pilot the *Raven II* against the forces of Gir Draxon, on nine different worlds. You receive a distress message from Terran Command, requesting assistance as the Arcturans are attacking—then, suddenly, the message calmly cancels the alert. Yeah, sure! You recall Gir Draxon's lack of appreciation of life and his desire to plunder and destroy just for the thrill. This is one nemesis you have to destroy.

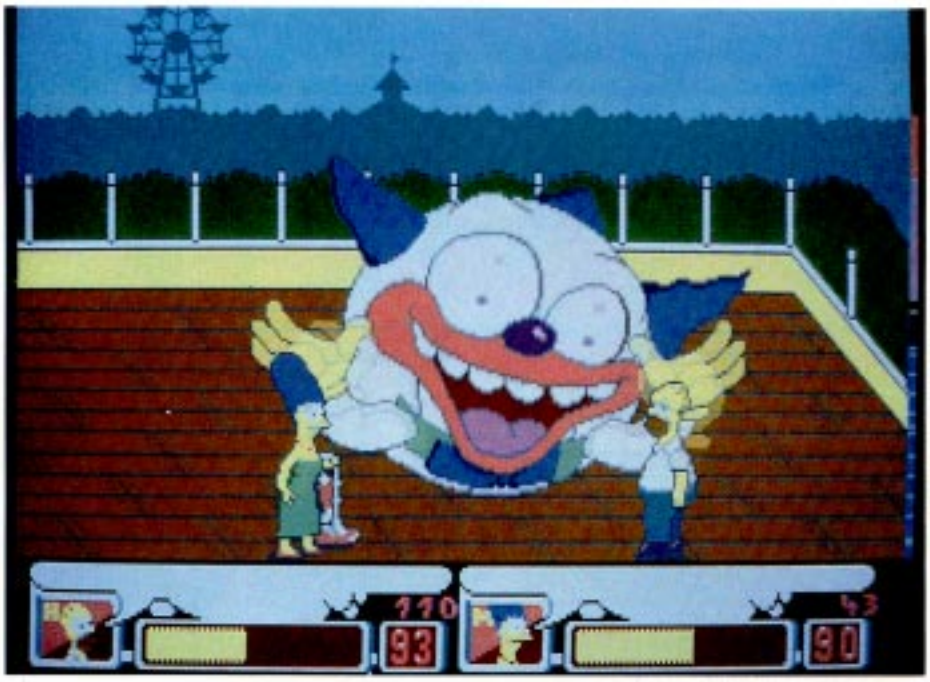
You'll run into Darters armed with lasers, Phoenix tanks that are extremely maneuverable, Montrose hovertanks whose cannons can do you nothing but ill, Ptera airborne craft packed with dual lasers, and much more, including a ramming tank whose blade appears to be made of indestructible steel! Against these you stack your *Raven II.* With a fully detailed operational display panel, and with superb control using the keyboard and joy stick, you'll soon be engaged in sizzling combat. Capture power modules and use their capabilities as you cruise each planet. You'll soon commit numerous hours to the defeat of Gir Draxon and his forces. This game is sure to please any die-hard arcader! It supports Tandy, EGA, and VGA graphics, with Thunderboard Pro, AdLib, Roland, or Sound Blaster sound boards.



Nova 9 (Dynamix)

The Simpsons' Arcade Game ***
Konami
PC/MS-DOS version $49.95

Konami has released a decent conversion of the *Simpsons* arcade game, bringing to PC/MS-DOS gamers almost all of the fun found in the arcade machine model. Maggie, the Simpsons' baby, was knocked into a crowd of escaping jewel thieves who accidentally let the stolen jewel fall into Maggie's mouth. Maggie, thinking it to be a sucking toy, won't let go, so the thieves kidnapped her along with the jewel. It is up to Homer, Lisa, Marge, and Bart to recover the lost baby. It is not an easy road, for they have to fight their way through six levels of action, all based on the hit television show.



The Simpsons' Arcade Game (Konami)

The game can be played by one or two players. The joy stick is the best way to control the Simpsons. One button makes the character jump, while the other button allows you to go on the offensive.

Each Simpson has a different attack. For example, Bart attacks with his skateboard, while Homer attacks with his fists. Two Simpsons can combine to form a super-attack. Marge and Homer, when combined, knock down the enemies with a vicious barrel roll. Weapons, such as cola cans and signs, can be picked up along the way to use on the thieves. Other items, such as pies and apples, can replenish one's energy bar, which decreases in value when a Simpson is the recipient of an assault.

Overall, the graphics are decently done, staying within Matt Groening's animation style. The music, however, could have been better, with only the familiar theme song being to our liking. If you enjoy a mindless aggression-release game, then buy *The Simpsons*. This game supports VGA and Soundblaster equipment.

V for Victory: Battleset 1, D-Day Utah Beach—1944 *****
Three-Sixty
Macintosh version $59.95

Watch out, SSI and SSG—Three-Sixty has produced a superb World War II battle simulation. *V for Victory* is an intricate war game based upon the Normandy invasion of World War II. You may participate as either an American or German commander.

There is little doubt in our minds that this game is probably the best war simulation ever produced for any computer. Remember when previous war simulations required numerous key presses and assemblies of orders just to move units? Not so with *V for Victory*. Your unit icons possess all of the detail necessary to allow you to place them in their most effective positions. Simply click on the icon and drag it to its new location during the Planning phase. Order artillery fire and ground support from your airbases. Then order Execution and watch your battle plans succeed or fail. With only two phases to worry about, you can even order your staff to handle such matters as supply, one of the most important elements of your campaign.

There are six scenarios; the first five are individual battles. Scenario one finds you leading the 9th Infantry Division in its attempt to clean out all German resistance behind your own lines. This is also the tutorial scenario and is the easiest of the lot, although it required four games for us to learn how to quickly assault and capture towns required for victory. The second scenario requires that the 101st Airborne take Carentan within three days—no easy feat. The third scenario finds you facing an SS Panzergrenadier Division counterattack as it tries to recapture Carentan. Then, with four divisions, you are to assault Cherbourg. The final scenario finds you trying to permanently isolate Cherbourg. The sixth scenario is a total campaign game, one that will require hours to finish. Thankfully, you can save your simulation and continue the campaign when you have time.

The interface is as smooth as silk. Everything from weather and victory conditions to individual unit displays are handled with the click of a mouse. You can alter the historical variants and even try to win under the "fog of war." You'll find nearly 500 military units representing land, sea, and air forces, as well as 15 terrain maps. Three-Sixty has set a new standard for war simulations. This is an absolute "must" purchase for any war gamer who owns a Macintosh. It can be played in either 256 color or black-and-white, and it supports System 7.

Back to the Future III **
Konami
PC/MS-DOS version $39.95

It's true—most movie (and game) sequels are not as good as the original. With *Back to the Future III*, not only does the hero, Marty, go back in time, we think the programmers do as well. VGA is an option in the installation program, but the game supports only 16 colors. You also play the game using only the keyboard. The action scenes are related to the film, but they become quite boring and frustratingly difficult. Konami has made some great products in the past, but pass this game when you see it in the present—or the future.

Clue corner

Conquests of the Longbow (Sierra)

1. Remember the hand code for the druidic name for the oak tree, as it will cause those who chase you to not see the forest for the tree.
2. Knocking over a goblet can assist in obtaining proof of your sincerity.
3. The gold net can catch the quick one.
4. Remember that there is only one accurate way to spell "liege."
5. Dexterity is required to avoid monk-thrown boulders while climbing down magic ivy.

The Lessers

Ultima VI (Origin)

To talk to Lord British at any point in the game, cast and place Enchant on a staff. You will notice the spell list stays on the screen. Talk to the third spell from the bottom of the list. (Afterwards, the face remains on the screen. Talk to the same place. You can do this as many times as you wish.)

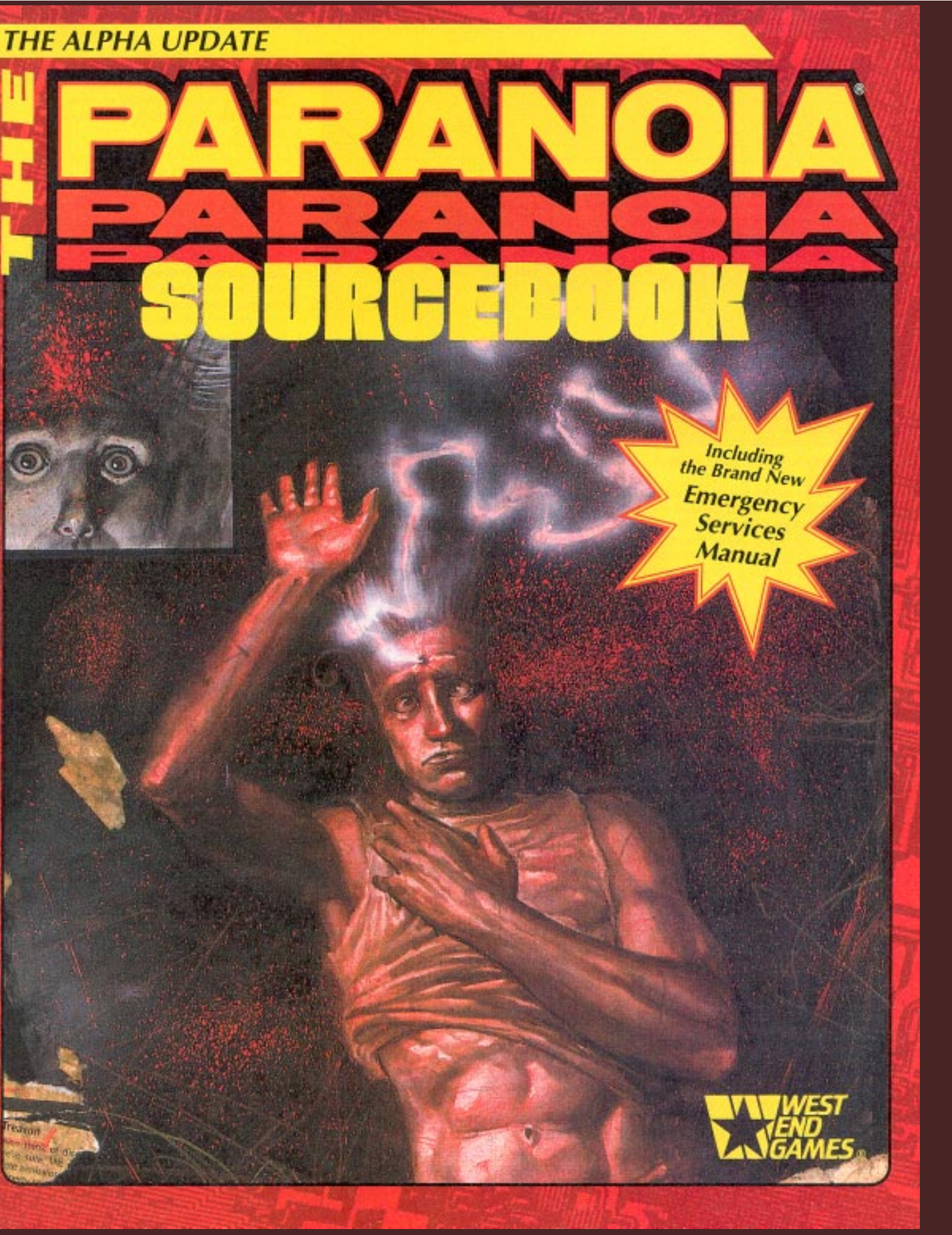
Charles Lin
Burnaby, British Columbia

Thanks for turning to us. Don't forget that your fellow gamers are depending upon you to assist them in reaching their gaming goals! If you have hints or tips for your games, send them to: Clue Corner, c/o the Lessers, 521 Czerny Street, Tracy CA 95376. Until next month, game on!

* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

THE ALPHA UPDATE

THE PARANOIA SOURCEBOOK



Including the Brand New Emergency Services Manual

WEST END GAMES

CONVENTION CALENDAR

Convention Calendar Policies

This column is a service to our readers worldwide. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here, but the following guidelines **must** be observed.

In order to ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be either typed double-spaced or printed legibly on standard manuscript paper. The contents of each listing must be short and succinct.

The information given in the listing **must** include the following, in this order:

1. Convention title and dates held;
2. Site and location;
3. Guests of honor (if applicable);
4. Special events offered;
5. Registration fees or attendance requirements; and,
6. Address(es) and telephone number(s) where additional information and confirmation can be obtained.

Convention flyers, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements will not be considered for use in this column; we prefer to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. Unless stated otherwise, all dollar values given for U.S. and Canadian conventions are in U.S. currency.

WARNING: We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Our wide circulation ensures that over a quarter of a million readers worldwide see each issue. Accurate information is your responsibility.

Copy deadlines are the last Monday of each month, two months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. Thus, the copy deadline for the December issue is the last Monday of October. Announcements for North American and Pacific conventions must be mailed to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. Announcements for Europe must be posted an additional month before the deadline to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Limited, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom.

If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, please contact us immediately. Most questions or changes should be directed to the magazine editors at TSR, Inc., (414) 248-3625 (U.S.A.). Questions or changes concerning European conventions should be directed to TSR Limited, (0223) 212517 (U.K.).

❖ indicates an Australian convention.
❊ indicates a Canadian convention.
❁ indicates a European convention.

* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

POINTCON XV, April 10-12 **NY**

This convention will be held at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y. Events include AD&D®, BATTLETECH*, WARHAMMER FANTASY* and 40,000*, JOHNNY REB*, and microarmor games, with RPGA™ Network events, a miniatures-painting contest, an auction, computer games, and open gaming. Registration: $8 preregistered, or $10 at the door; no event fees. Write to: Cadet Robert Williams, P.O. Box 3643, West Point NY 10997.

TECHNICON 9, April 10-12 **VA**

This convention will be held at the Donald Brown Center for Continuing Education in Blacksburg, Va. Guests include Tom Deitz, Mark Rogers, and Colby Perkins. Activities include a dance, an art show and auction, panels, gaming, SF and anime videos, computer games, and a dealers' area. Registration: $23 at the door. Students receive a $3 discount. Write to: TECHNICON, c/o VTSFFC, P.O. Box 256, Blacksburg VA 24063-0256; or call: (703) 953-1214.

BATTLECON '92, April 11-12 **NE**

This BATTLETECH* game-only convention will be held at the Reunion Hall on the University of Nebraska campus. Events include tournaments and other games, plus a miniatures-painting contest. Registration: $2/day preregistered; $3/day or $5/weekend at the door. Send an SASE to: 48th Ronin, P.O. Box 21956, Lincoln NE 68542-1956.

CONVENT, April 11-13 **WV**

This convention will be held on the campus of Marshall University in Huntington, W. Va. Events include an RPGA™ Network D&D® tournament and scads of other games. Guest of honor is Richard Tucholka. Registration: $5/tournament or $3/nontournament for the weekend. Write to: Chuck Puckett, 821 Holderby Hall, Marshall Univ., Huntington WV 25955; or to: Steven Saws, 558 Aspen St., Morgantown WV 26505.

HYPOTHETICON, April 11 **CT**

This convention, hosted by the Univ. of Connecticut SF Society, will be held at the Univ. of Connecticut, Storrs branch Student Union. Events include CALL OF CTHULHU*, TOON*, and AD&D® games, with panels, Japanimation, movies, and dealers. Registration: $7. Write to: HYPOTHETICON, c/o Anne MacFadyen, Rm. 128B Shippee Hall, Univ. of Conn., Storrs CT 06269; or call: (203) 427-4985.

RU-CON '92, April 11-12 **PA**

Note: This convention was previously announced as taking place in the Holiday Inn in Williamsport, Pa. This was an error. The convention will be held at the Days Inn in Williamsport, Pa. Events include many gaming events (some RPGA™ Network-sanctioned), tournaments, and dealers. Registration: $12/day or $20/weekend at the door. Send a business-sized SASE to: The Role-Playing Underground, Woolridge Hall, Box 39, Lock Haven Univ., Lock Haven PA 17745-2396; or call: (717) 893-3237.

AMIGOCON 7, April 24-26 **TX**

This convention will be held at the Sunland Park Holiday Inn in El Paso, Tex. Guests include Jennifer Roberson, Patricia Davis, and Mel White. Registration: $18/weekend or $6-$9/day at the door. Write to: AMIGOCON 7, P.O. Box 3177, El Paso TX 79923.

DEFCON III, April 24-26 **NJ**

This convention will be held at the Sheraton Inn in East Brunswick, N.J. Events include AD&D®, CHAMPIONS*, WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY*, RUNEQUEST*, SPACE: 1889*, CAR WARS*, CYBERPUNK*, MARVEL SUPER HEROES™, BLOOD BOWL*, CALL OF CTHULHU*, and ROLEMASTER* games, plus a FASA-sanctioned BATTLETECH* tournament. Other activities include a miniatures-painting workshop, a chess exhibition, a costume contest, and board games. Registration: $15/weekend preregistered; $20/weekend at the door. Single-day rates are available. Write to: DEFCON, 16 Grove St., Somerset NJ 08873; or call Pete at: (908) 249-0570 evenings and weekends.

GAME FAIRE '92, April 24-26 **WA**

This convention will be held Student Union Building, #17, on the campus of Spokane Falls Community College in Spokane, Wash. Events include AD&D®, BATTLETECH*, CALL OF CTHULHU*, SHADOWRUN*, CYBERPUNK*, STAR WARS*, and WARHAMMER* games. Other activities include SCA demos, a miniatures-painting contest, and historical and microarmor gaming. Registration: $12/weekend preregistered; $16/weekend at the door. Single-day passes are available. Write to: Game Faire, c/o Merlyn's, N. 1 Browne, Spokane WA 99201; or call: (509) 624-0957.

CHAOTICON I, April 25-26 **WI**

This SF&F convention will be held in the Student Union of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Events include AD&D®, SPACE MARINE*, CLAY-O-RAMA, CAR WARS*, TALISMAN*, and BATTLETECH* games. Other activities include seminars and movies. Registration: $5/day or $7/weekend; all games are free, subject to space. Send an SASE to: CHAOTICON I, 2469 Walter Way, Green Bay WI 54311-7070; or call Adam at: (414) 465-5318.

WIZARD'S CHALLENGE '92, May 1-3 ❊

This convention will be held at the Delta Regina in Regina, Saskatchewan. Events include AD&D®, BATTLETECH*, WARHAMMER FANTASY*, GURPS*, SHADOWRUN*, STAR FLEET BATTLES*, SUPREMACY*, and CAR WARS* games, with game demos, movies, a game auction, and a Medieval Feast. Registration: $15/weekend, not including tournament fees. Write to: Ken McGovern, c/o The Wizards Corner II, 2101 Broad St., Regina, Sask., CANADA S4P 1Y6; or call: (306) 757-8544.

CONCENTRICS '92, May 2-3 **NH**

This convention will be held in the Love Gym of Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, N.H. Events include AD&D®, CALL OF CTHULHU*, SHADOWRUN*, PARANOIA*, and DIPLOMACY* games. Preregistration is required for some

events as space is limited. Registration: $10. Write to: CONCENTRICS, 27 Court St., Exeter NH 03833.

GAMES DAY '92, May 10 **WI**
This convention will be held in the Shorewood American Legion Northshore Post #331 in Shorewood, Wis. Activities include games, a silent auction, food, and door prizes. Judges are welcome. Registration: $3. Write to: Napoleon's, 3948 N. Maryland Ave., Shorewood WI 53202.

BLOODSUCKING CONTRAPTION '92 May 15-17 **MI**
This SF convention will be held at the Airport Radisson hotel in Detroit, Mich. Guests include Nick Pollota and Bob & Ann Passovoy. Registration: $20. Write to: CONTRAPTION, P.O. Box 2285, Ann Arbor MI 48106; or call: (313) 334-4191.

CONDUIT 2, May 15-17 **UT**
This SF&F/gaming convention will be held at the Quality Inn in Salt Lake City, Utah. Guests include Roger Zelazny, Mike Stackpole, Liz Danforth, and Eric Wujcik. Activities include a masquerade, art and short-story contests, films, seminars, and open gaming. Registration: $20/weekend before April 30; $24/weekend at the door. Write to: CONDUIT 2, c/o Dave Powell, 2566 Blaine Ave., Salt Lake City UT 84108; or call: (801) 467-9517.

OASIS V, May 15-17 **FL**
This convention will be held at the Ramada Inn, Altamonte Springs in Altamonte, Fla. Guests include Michael Bishop, Holly Bird, Ann & Kendall Morris, and Andre Norton. Activities include a costume contest, a dealers' room, an art show and auction, a con suite, open and tournament gaming, videos, and panels. Registration: $20. Dealers are welcome. Make checks payable to OASFIS. Write to: OASFIS, P.O. Box 616469, Orlando FL 32861-6469.

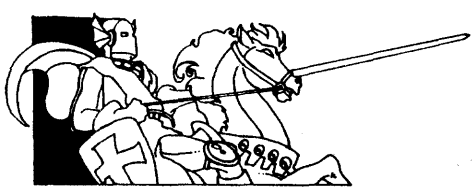
DIXIE TREK '92, May 17-19 **GA**
This convention will be held at the Sheraton Century Center hotel in Atlanta, Ga. Guests include actors Denise Crosby and Jonathan Harris, and musician John Serrie. Activities include an exhibit concourse and dealers' room, model and model design workshops, an art show and print shop, a con suite, a video room, and gaming. Registration: $27 before May 7; $30 at the door. RPGA™ Network and club discounts are available. Write to: DIXIE TREK, Box 464351, Lawrenceville GA 30244; or call: (404) 925-2813.

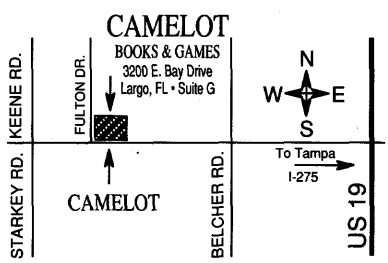
GAMESCAUCUS II, May 22-25 **CA**
Presented by Trigaming Associates, this convention will be held at the Oakland Airport Hilton in Oakland, Calif. Events include an RPGA™ AD&D® tournament, plus AD&D®, CALL OF CTHULHU*, CHAMPIONS*, GURPS*, DIPLOMACY*, AXIS & ALLIES*, WARHAMMER*, ROLEMASTER*, STAR WARS*, CIVILIZATION*, and TALISMAN* games. Other activities include dealers' room, a painting contest, a PBM room, a flea market, and 24-hour movies. Registration: $25/weekend preregistered, or $30/weekend at the door; GMs pay $10/weekend. Make checks payable to Trigaming Associates. Write to: Trigaming Assoc., P.O. Box 4867, Walnut Creek CA 94596-0867; or call Larry or Mike at: (510) 798-7152 Saturday afternoons.

The Largest Selection Of Fantasy Role-Playing Games and Books

New and Used - Buy • Sell • Trade

- Comic books and collectibles
- Game room on premises
- Largest selection of "Games Workshop" supplies
- Huge selection of gaming miniatures and all accessories and supplements





CAMELOT
BOOKS & GAMES
3200 E. Bay Drive
Largo, FL 34641
(813) 535-4734

Open Mon.-Sat. 9am-8pm
Open Sunday 11am-5pm
Visa & Mastercard Accepted

Send $1.00 for mail order catalog

GAMEX '92, May 22-25 **CA**
This convention will be held at the Airport Hyatt hotel in Los Angeles, Calif. Events include all types of family, board, strategy, and adventure gaming. Other activities include a flea market, an auction, and a dealers' area. Write to: STRATEGICON, P.O. Box 3849, Torrance CA 90510-3849; or call: (310) 326-9440.

ONCE UPON A CON, May 22-24 **CO**
This convention, presented by the IFGS, will be held at the Holiday Inn in Northglenn, Colo. Activities include a video room, a trivia contest, a costume ball and contest, a dealers' room, an art room and auction, and a con suite. Registration: $18. Write to: IFGS CON '92, P.O. Box 100840, Denver CO 80250; or call Collin at: (303) 665-4082.

KETTERING GAME CONVENTION VI May 23-24 **OH**
This convention will be held at the Charles I. Lathrem Senior Center in Kettering, Ohio. Events include FRPGs, board and miniatures games, an RPGA™ Network tournament, and computer games. Other activities include a 16-player World War II "Soldier" computer game. Registration: $2/day, Write to: Bob Von Gruenigen, 804 Willowdale Ave., Kettering OH 45429; or call: (513) 298-3224.

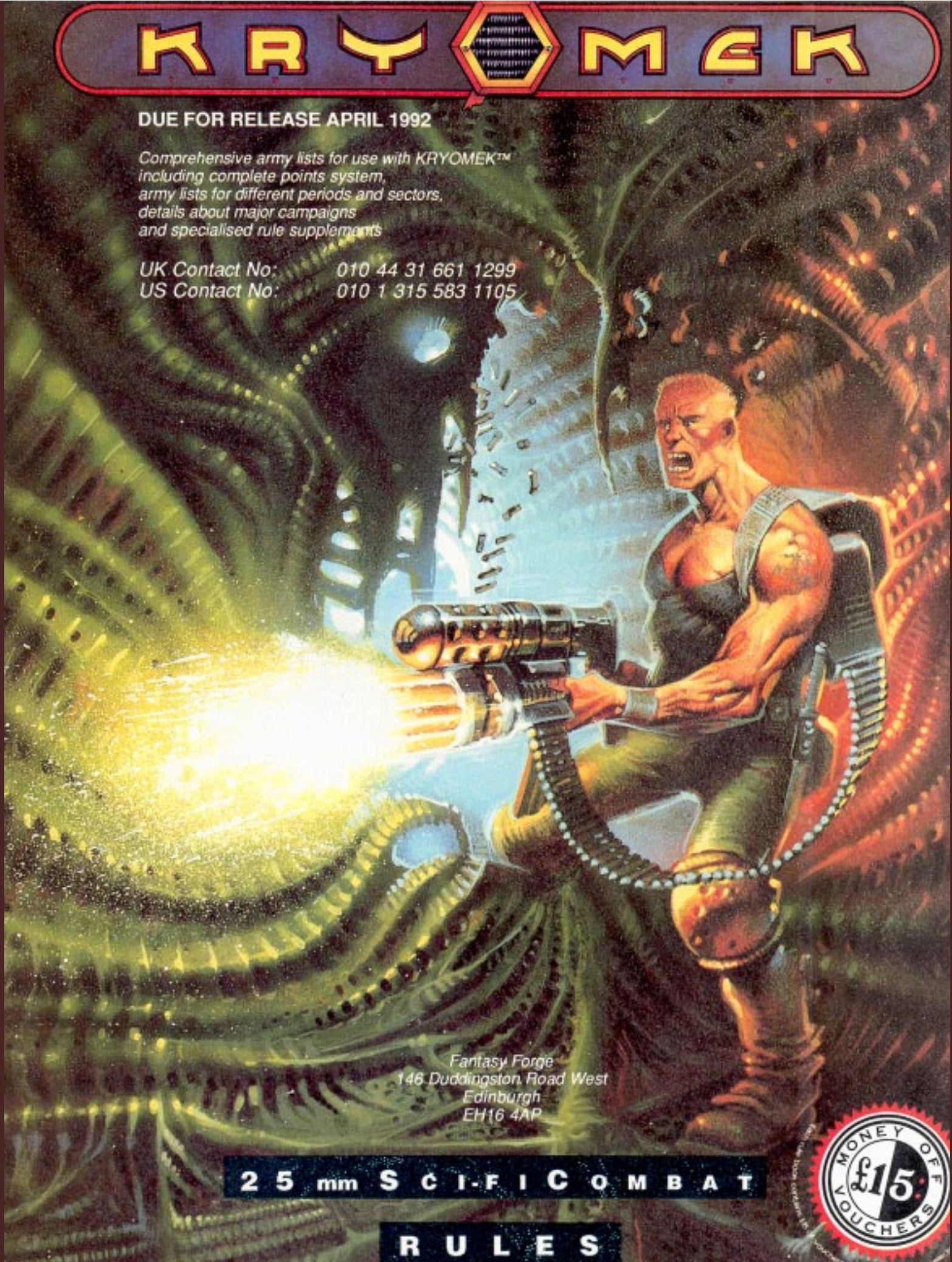
DER SÜDWEST-CON '92, May 28-31 ❁
This convention will be held in Karlsruhe, Germany. Events include board, role-playing, PBM, and tabletop games, with exhibitions and championship tournaments. Write to: Winni Dörge-Heller, Goldlackweg 6, D-7500 Karlsruhe 51, GERMANY 0721/888978; or to: Reinhard Müller, Willi-Andreas-Allee 3, D-7500 Karlsruhe 1, GERMANY

NASHCON '92, May 29-31 **TN**
This convention, hosted by the HMGS-Midsouth and Games Extraordinaire, will be held at the Music City Rodeway Inn in Nashville, Tenn. Events include miniatures tournaments, plus role-playing and board games. Other activities include a dealers' room, a game auction, FigFair, and Waterpistol Waterloo. Registration: $15. Write to: NASHCON, c/o 2713 Lebanon Pike, Nashville TN 27314; or call: (615) 883-4800.

BEER AND PRETZELS HI, May 30-31 ❁
This convention will be held at the Town Hall in Burton on Trent, Staffs, England. Events include board, role-playing, and tabletop gaming. Other activities include a dealers' area. Dealers are welcome. Registration: £3/day or £5/weekend preregistered; £3.50/day or £6/weekend at the door. Write to: Spirit Games, 98 Station St., Burton on Trent, Staffs, UNITED KINGDOM DE14 1BT

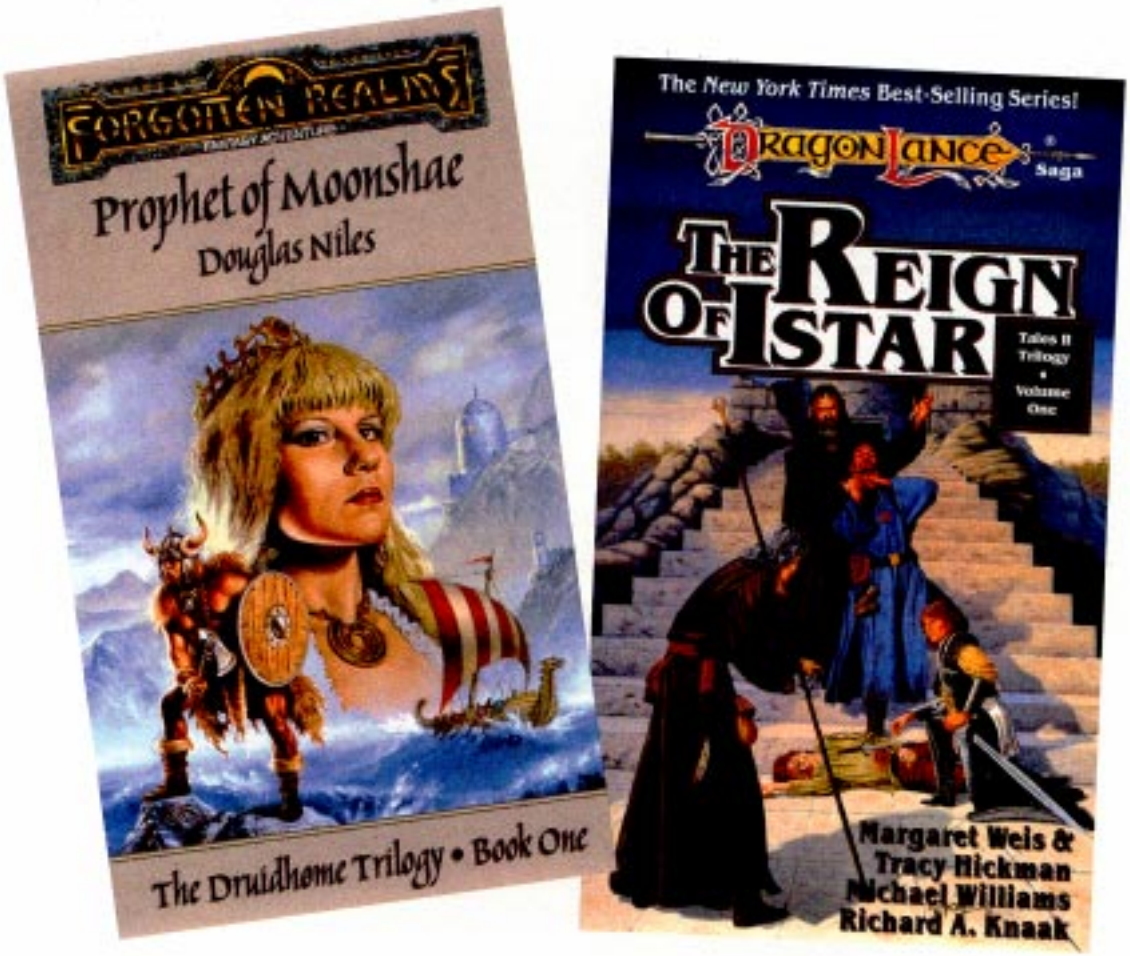
GLASSCON '92, May 30-31 **NJ**
This convention will be held on the campus of Glassboro State College in Glassboro, N.J. Events include RPGA™ Network AD&D® tournaments, plus AD&D®, BATTLETECH*, KINGMAKER*, DIPLOMACY*, and GURPS* games. Other activities include board and war games and a dealers' area. Registration: $10/weekend preregistered, or $7/Sat. and $5/Sun. preregistered (fees at the door will be higher). Events costs are $1/time slot. Write to: GLASSCON, P.O. Box 58, Wind Gap PA 18091-0058. Proceeds will go to the Center for Exceptional Children at Glassboro State College.

Continued on page 118


KRYOMEK
DUE FOR RELEASE APRIL 1992
Comprehensive army lists for use with KRYOMEK™
including complete points system,
army lists for different periods and sectors,
details about major campaigns
and specialised rule supplements
UK Contact No: 010 44 31 661 1299
US Contact No: 010 1 315 583 1105
Fantasy Forge
146 Duddingston Road West
Edinburgh
EH16 4AP
25 mm SCI-FI COMBAT
RULES
MONEY OFF
£15
VOUCHERS

The heroes who refused to die

by Will Larson and Pat McGilligan



The history of popular literature is full of authors who have tried, unsuccessfully, to walk away from heroes or worlds they had created, only to be drawn irresistibly back to them.

No less a figure than Sir Arthur Conan Doyle tried to kill off his legendary detective hero, Sherlock Holmes, in order to move in new directions in his writing career, only to have Holmes's fans raise such a hue and cry that he brought his uncannily deductive hero back to life. After the success of *King Solomon's Mines*, H. Rider Haggard was obliged to return to Darkest Africa and resurrect Alan Quatermain for the sequel, *She*.

In more recent times, the prolific Isaac Asimov returned to his roots with a greatly expanded version of his classic story *Nightfall* after several decades. The immensely popular mystery writer John D. McDonald, sensing early on that he had created yet another larger-than-life hero in "salvage specialist" Travis McGee, took a different tack, alternating his much-anticipated McGee stories with dozens of highly successful stand-alone novels. With a little thought, any reasonably well-read follower of popular literature would have little trouble greatly expanding this list.

This is all by way of introducing our column this month, which deals with writers of imagination returning to worlds they brought alive for us in the past—specifically, the authors of the best-selling Moonshae and Tales trilogies, set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® and DRAGONLANCE® settings, respectively.

The Druidhome Trilogy

Back in 1987, Douglas Niles's imagination began populating a small group of islands in the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting called the Moonshaes with industrious Ffolk, fierce Northmen, and giant, lumbering creatures called firbolgs, just to name a few. The result was a series of books called the Moonshae Trilogy. Someone else's imagination must have been tuned to the same wave length, because to date the series has sold well over 600,000 copies. In fact, the Moonshaes apparently made such an impression on readers that many asked for more, and this year their patience will

be rewarded with the launching of the Druidhome Trilogy. Leading off the trilogy is *Prophet of Moonshae* (March 1992), to be followed by *The Coral Kingdom* (September 1992) and *The Druid Queen* (Spring 1993).

What with the plethora of sequels in the movies (and elsewhere) in recent memory *(Rocky*, *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, cuddly Freddy, Indiana Jones, etc.), we wondered whether consumers might be becoming just a wee bit jaded with this phenomenon, suspecting that each subsequent adventure was merely a rehash of its popular predecessor. With this in mind, we questioned Doug about his new Druidhome Trilogy.

"I don't think of this as a typical sequel, for a couple of important reasons. First, the story picks up twenty years after the close of the Moonshae Trilogy, and the human characters have aged accordingly and changed somewhat. The villains in the Druidhome Trilogy are completely different. Bhaal is gone, and the main characters, for the most part, are also different.

"Just as I did the first time, I find the Moonshaes a fascinating locale to write about. I wanted Tristan and Robyn to be bigger-than-life characters—epic heroes, if you will—so they're moved off center stage. Although both appear in the Druidhome Trilogy, the conflict centers on their daughters, Alicia and Deirdre. I wanted the victory in the original Moonshae series to be satisfying, which is why Robyn's and Tristan's accomplishments led to twenty years of prosperity.

"The downside of the original trilogy was the loss of the Earthmother. Reader feedback told me people were disappointed with that. Given all these factors, I felt there was lots more story to tell. I also feel this is the perfect topic for me right now, and definitely *not* just another sequel."

DRAGONLANCE® Tales II Trilogy

DRAGONLANCE saga authors have battled with the same questions, which brings us to the upcoming Tales II Trilogy.

Even the most dedicated reader of the international best-selling DRAGONLANCE series may need a gentle reminder of what the Tales series are all about.

The original Tales Trilogy was published five years ago, in three installments: volume 1, *The Magic of Krynn;* volume 2, *Kender*, *Gully Dwarves*, *and Gnomes;* and volume 3, *Love and War*. They were the first DRAGONLANCE books to follow the *New York Times* Top Ten best-selling Chronicles and Legends, by the original authors Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman. Weis and Hickman edited the first Tales series in 1987, contributed their own untold tales of Krynn folklore, and helped discover a lineup of writers, many previously unpublished, who since have gone on to pen many DRAGONLANCE books and forge their own reputations as first-echelon fantasy authors.

In the intervening years, there has been a growing demand for a new set of short stories, another "shared world" Tales Trilogy to match the quality and popularity of the first. It has not been feasible, until now, to reassemble the talent necessary for the task.

Nick O'Donohoe, Nancy Varian Berberick, Richard A. Knaak, Paul B. Thompson and Tonya R. Carter—these were among the list of writers who emerged in the first Tales series to become the bulwark of TSR's DRAGONLANCE line in the years since, who also wrote fantasy novels set in their own worlds, set outside of Krynn. Michael Williams (the unofficial bard of the DRAGONLANCE saga), Roger E. Moore (longtime editor of DRAGON® Magazine), and Douglas Niles (who, as one of TSR's game designers, has written numerous DRAGONLANCE modules) were part of the original design team, and they, too, have gained a reputation as distinctive novelists. To this group are added Dan Parkinson and Mark Anthony.

Arranged according to the timeline of Krynn, volume 1, *The Reign of Istar*, will be on sale in April; volume 2, *The Cataclysm*, in July; and volume 3, *The War of the Lance*, in November.

By special arrangement for this second Tales series, Margaret Weis and Tracy Hickman return to the TSR fold, taking time out from their successful careers (they have a long-term collaborative book contract with Bantam, and Weis writes solo novels as well) to write fresh novellas for each Tales II book and to oversee the content and quality of all of the stories.

It is estimated that, between them, the Tales II authors have roughly 100 novels to their credit, and many more modules and game-design credits. They and others have written most of the 18 DRAGONLANCE novels for TSR since the initial success of the series, carrying on in the tradition of Weis and Hickman. Including the first Tales, DRAGONLANCE books have sold upwards of 10 million copies in a dozen different languages.

The opportunity to return to the world of Krynn—with all of its unique fantasy elements—was a welcome one for each of the authors, though in some cases there had to be a period of adjustment and refamiliarization.

For example, Nancy Varian Berberick, whose first novel, *The Jewels of Elvish*, was published in the TSR™ Books line, has gone on to write a series of books for Ace Books, including *Shadows of the Seventh Moon*, *A Child of Elvish*, and the forthcoming *The Panthers Hoard*. Apart from keeping up her reading as a fan, she had not visited the world of Krynn as a writer since 1988. "I was amazed at how much I had forgotten of the small details," says Berberick. "I've been spending the last couple of years in Dark Ages England, and I had some difficulty separating the two worlds in my mind. It's always tough to write in somebody else's world, but I had spent a lot of time in my life in Krynn, and it was nice to go home again."

Michael Williams, likewise, just finished his Thief to King trilogy for Warner—interspersing his work for that publisher with his well-known DRAGONLANCE novels *Weasels Luck*, *Galen Beknighted* (part of the Heroes Trilogy), and the forthcoming *The Oath and the Measure* (part of the Meetings Sextet). "I was on the original design team," Williams reminisces. "The world of Krynn grew beyond my dreams, though not beyond my wildest dreams, because I always saw plenty of possibilities in it. It's fun to return, now and then, because Krynn is big enough that you can notch off little corners of the world and make them your own. You can remain faithful to what Margaret and Tracy invented, while still having a lot of freedom to create."

One of the unique aspects of the new Tales II Trilogy is that some of the stories, though they will stand alone, also will be linked to others in the series. For example, Douglas Niles has created a character, a diligent scribe doing his best to keep up with the turmoil of history, whose epistles to the all-knowing Astinus will appear in each volume. Dan Parkinson—a prolific author who ranges across many genres and whose TSR credits include the popular *Starsong* as well as *The Gates of Thorbardin* (in the Heroes Trilogy)—writes about a roving band of gully dwarves who will pop up sequentially in each of the Tales II books. His work in this area will dovetail nicely with his research and preparation for the long-awaited Dwarven Nations epic for TSR, coming up in the DRAGONLANCE series in 1993.

To the most loyal and meticulous readers, there will be frosting on the cake in the form of many cross-references to previously published DRAGONLANCE works. Richard A. Knaak has contributed a story, for example, that borrows its main character from his first DRAGONLANCE novel, *The Legend of Huma*. The fabled companions (Raistlin, Caramon, *et al.)* will make cameo appearances in some of the stories, and there will be key activity by major DRAGONLANCE figures—heroes and villains—especially in the novellas by Weis and Hickman.

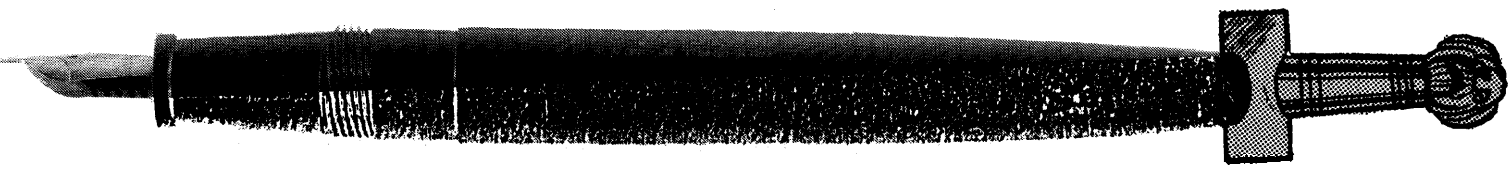
Indeed, this second Tales series is so packed with vivid and exciting material that there already is talk around the office of another book in the series. At this point, you can be sure of one thing: With Tales II, TSR promises a wondrous and enthralling collection of short stories that will live up to its predecessor and the five-year anticipation between the first and second series. Ω



The Power of the Pen

Here's your chance to tell us what you think—and *win!*

by the DRAGON® Magazine staff



You, the loyal readers of DRAGON® Magazine, can now tell us what you like and don't like about our magazine. We will use your responses to chart our future direction, so this is your chance to get the magazine you really want. In addition, we are going to award prizes to ten randomly selected respondents, and you'll be able to choose your own prize should you win!

Photocopy this page, check one *and only one* box per numbered entry, drop the form into an envelope, and mail it to: DRAGON Magazine Survey, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147 U.S.A.

Give us your opinions and you could win any product listed in this months "TSR Previews" column (be sure to correctly note the product number of the TSR product you want, which is listed at the bottom of each "TSR Previews" entry). Incorrect or unreadable product numbers, names, or addresses will forfeit your prize. Only one response per address, please. Not only will multiple responses from one person skew the results of this survey, they will also cause you to forfeit any prize you might have otherwise won. All response forms must be postmarked by 6/30/92 to be eligible for the prize drawing.

Please print your full name and mailing address below, so that if you're chosen as one of our ten random winners, we can send your prize to you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Now fill in the four-digit product number of any one product listed in this issue's "TSR Previews" column. You will win if your name is drawn as one of our ten randomly selected winners.

_____

1. You are: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Please check the highest level of schooling you've completed.
Grade 6 or below ☐ Grades 7-9 ☐ Grades 10-12 ☐ College ☐ Graduate school or beyond ☐

Please rate the following regular features of DRAGON Magazine for their value to you as a reader. The rating system is as follows: 5 = I always read the feature, 4 = I usually read the feature, 3 = I read the feature about 50% of the time, 2 = I rarely read the feature, 1 = I never read the feature.

Feature	5	4	3	2	1
3. TSR Previews	-	-	-	-	-
4. Convention Calendar	-	-	-	-	-
5. Sage Advice	-	-	-	-	-
6. Forum	-	-	-	-	-
7. Twilight Empire®	-	-	-	-	-
8. Dragonmirth	-	-	-	-	-
9. Gamer's Guide	-	-	-	-	-
10. Role-playing Reviews	-	-	-	-	-
11. The Role of Computers	-	-	-	-	-
12. Through the Looking Glass	-	-	-	-	-
13. The Role of Books	-	-	-	-	-
14. Novel Ideas	-	-	-	-	-
15. The Game Wizards	-	-	-	-	-
16. The Voyage of the *Princess Ark*	-	-	-	-	-
17. The MARVEL®-Phile	-	-	-	-	-
18. Fiction	-	-	-	-	-

Please rate the artwork in the magazine on the scale of 1 to 5, with 5 = Superb, 4 = Good, 3 = Average, 2 = Poor, 1= Awful.

Art	5	4	3	2	1
19. Cover art	-	-	-	-	-
20. Interior art	-	-	-	-	-

Below is a series of topics covered in DRAGON Magazine in the past. We'd like to know if changing the amount of coverage we give to these topics would be valuable to you as a reader. The rating system is as follows: 5 = I always read the topic, 4 = I usually read the topic, 3 = I read the topic about 50% of the time, 2 = I rarely read the topic, 1= I never read the topic.

Topic	5	4	3	2	1
21. SPELLJAMMER™ setting	-	-	-	-	-
22. RAVENLOFT™ setting	-	-	-	-	-
23. DARK SUN™ setting	-	-	-	-	-
24. WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting	-	-	-	-	-
25. DRAGONLANCE® setting	-	-	-	-	-
26. AL-QADIM™ setting	-	-	-	-	-
27. FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting	-	-	-	-	-
28. D&D® game	-	-	-	-	-
29. MARVEL SUPER HEROE™ game	-	-	-	-	-
30. GAMMA WORLD® game	-	-	-	-	-
31. TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game	-	-	-	-	-
32. Science-fiction RPGs	-	-	-	-	-
33. Cyberpunk RPGs	-	-	-	-	-
34. Super hero RPGs	-	-	-	-	-
35. Horror RPGs	-	-	-	-	-
36. Espionage RPGs	-	-	-	-	-
37. Fantasy & SF board games	-	-	-	-	-
38. F&SF miniatures games	-	-	-	-	-
39. F&SF computer games	-	-	-	-	-
40. War games	-	-	-	-	-

Do you have any specific comments about DRAGON Magazine?

_____

_____

_____

Remember to clearly print your name, address, and product number of the one TSR product you'd like to win if you are a randomly selected winner. Photocopy this form, fill it out, and mail it to:

DRAGON Magazine Survey
P.O. Box 111
Lake Geneva WI 53147
U.S.A.

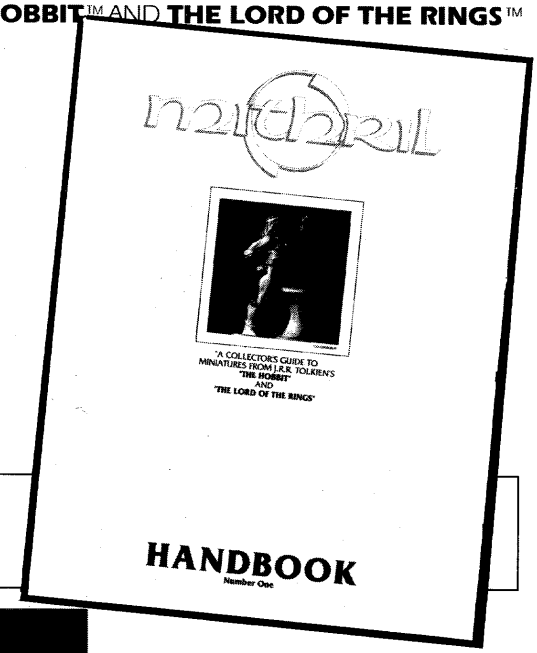
Unless otherwise noted, ® and ™ denote trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.
TWILIGHT EMPIRE is ™ & © 1992 by Steve Sullivan.
MARVEL and MARVEL SUPER HEROES are trademarks of Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc.

CLASSIC MINIATURES FOR JRR TOLKIEN'S WORLD OF **THE HOBBIT**™ AND **THE LORD OF THE RINGS**™

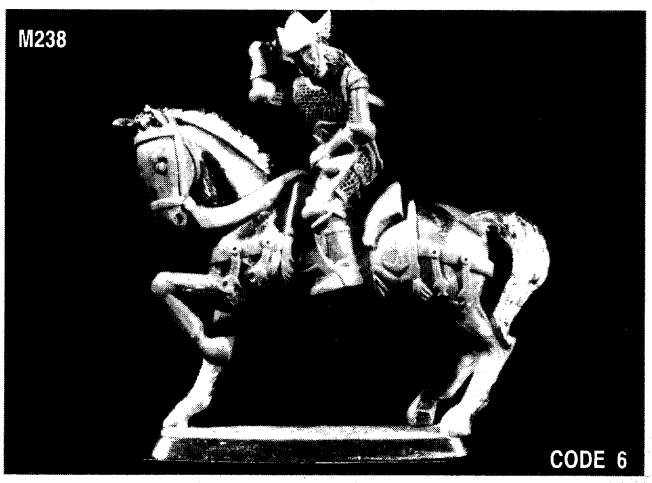
The Black Sword

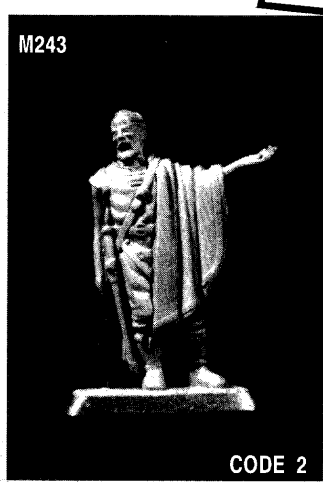
(Turin part 2)

	CODE		CODE
M238 Turin "Black Sword", Mounted	6	**M243** Brandir the Lame	2
M239 Orodreth of Nargathrond	3	**M244** Turin Turambar	2
M240 Finduilas & Gwindor (vignette)	5	**M245** Niniel the Bride	2
M241 Brodda the Easterling	2	**M246** Angband Orc Captain	2
M242 Hithlum Easterling Warrior	2	**M247** Elven Warrior (Noldo)	3



Mithril Handbook and Middle-earth Costume Guide available now from your dealer price £2.95[UK] /$6.50[US] or available directly from **Mithril Miniatures** (add p&p: 64p[UK]/99p[EC]/$1.75[US])











Also available in this series

TURIN TURAMBAR part 1	CODE
M215 Turin "Neithan", the outlaw	2
M216 Morwen and Nienor	4
M217 Thingol of Doriath	3
M218 Outlaw of Teiglin	2
M219 Mim and Ibun	3
M220 Turin Gorthol "Dread-helm"	2
M221 Beleg Stongbow	2
M222 Morgoth Orcs (2 figs)	4
M223 Wolf sentinel	3
M224 Gwindor	2

Other Middle-earth ranges still available include:

Mirkwood - The Forest Depths
At the Prancing Pony
Fellowship of the Ring
Laketown
Gorgoroth - the Plain of Mordor
Durin's Folk - Dwarves of Moria and Erebor
Ghost Warriors
Isengard - Tower of Saruman
Fangorn Forest
Minas Tirith - City of Gondor
The Elves of Lorien

Mithril Distributors:

Compendium
Hartenstaat 14
1016 CB
Amsterdam
Netherland
Tel. (020) 6381579

Hobby Games Ltd
S4 Rudford Ind. Est.
Ford Airfield
West Sussex BN18 0BD
UK
Tel. (0903) 730998

Jedko Games Co.
PO Box 164
Moorabbin
Victoria 3189
Australia
Tel. (03) 5551022

Juegos sin Fronteras SA
Mallorca 103-Entlo 2
08029 Barcelona
Espagna
Tel. (93) 4540741

Laurin
Luruper Chaussee
2000 Hamburg 50
Deutschland
Tel. (040) 896565

Prince August (USA) Ltd
The Byrne Building
Lincoln & Morgan Streets
Phoenixville PA 19460
USA
Tel. (215) 9357622

Manufactured by MITHRIL MINIATURES, MACROOM, Co. CORK, IRELAND Tel. 353 (26) 40222 Fax 353 (26) 40004

TRADEMARKS & COPYRIGHT 1991 TOLKIEN ENTERPRISES Inc.

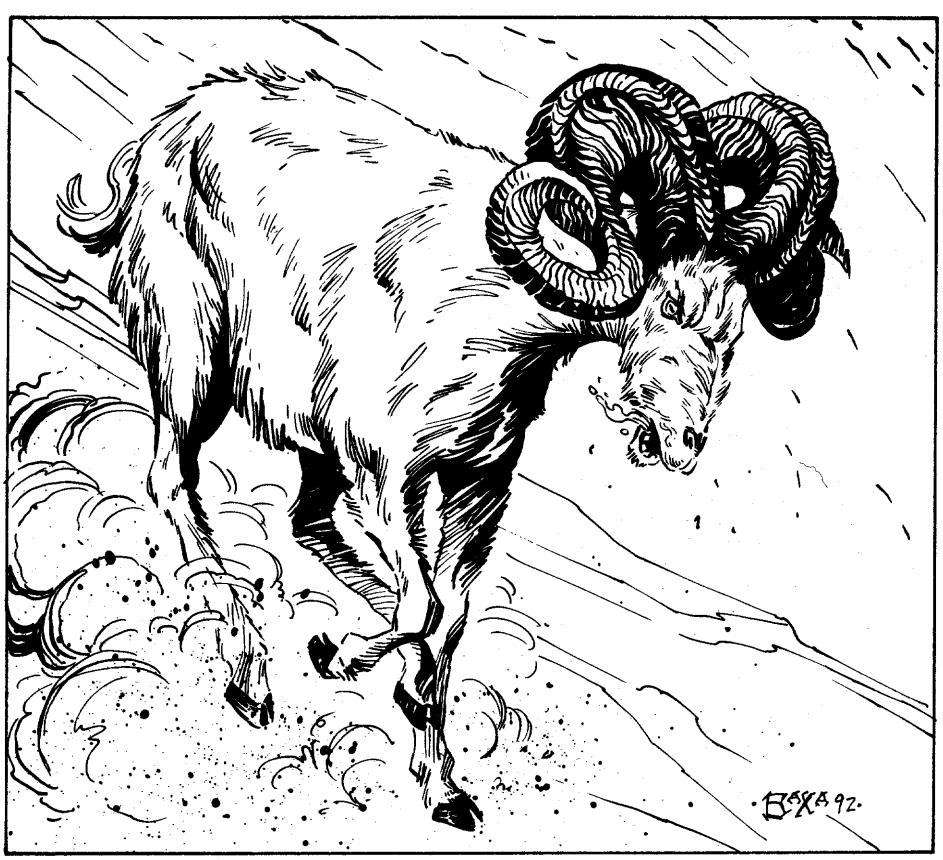


The Dragon's Bestiary

by Spike Y. Jones

Artwork by Thomas Baxa

Three peculiar beasts for all AD&D® campaigns



Battering ram

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: *Subarctic to temperate/Hills and mountains*
FREQUENCY *Rare*
ORGANIZATION: *Flock*
ACTIVITY CYCLE: *Day*
DIET: *Herbivore*
INTELLIGENCE: *Animal (1)*
TREASURE: *Nil*
ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*
NO. APPEARING: *1 (30%) or 2d8 (70%)*
ARMOR CLASS: *0 (head), 6 (body)*
MOVEMENT: *18*
HIT DICE: *5*
THAC0: *15*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1 butt*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *2d8*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Charge*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Immune to* slow *and* hold *spells; +4 save vs.* fear
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Nil*
SIZE: *L (6' at shoulder)*
MORALE: *Steady (11); see text*
XP VALUE: *975*

The term "battering rams" is often applied to an entire flock of these sheep—rams, ewes, and lambs alike. These creatures appear to be giant-sized, mountain-dwelling sheep with obviously enlarged horns. In most respects, they are identical

to their smaller cousins, coming in a variety of colors. Ewes of this species possess much smaller horns, have an overall armor class of 6, and have four hit dice.

Combat: Battering rams are normally unaggressive; the morale score applies to all events except those in which a male (here simply called a ram) sees a creature attacking its flock. In the latter case, the ram immediately charges and makes no further morale checks until it or its opponent is slain. In combat, this creature rams victims with its horns, gaining a +2 to hit and doing double damage if it has 30′ of straight running space to speed up to a charge. In addition, its head has an improved armor class, thanks to its thick horns and skull, that allows it to butt solid objects like walls without harm to itself. Doors, gates, portcullises, and the like must save vs. crushing blow at -4 or be destroyed; walls must make a structural saving throw against a small catapult (see the 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 76). Defensively, battering rams of either sex are immune to all *hold* and *slow* spells, although *charm* spells have normal effects on them.

Habitat/Society: Normally unaggressive, these sheep usually travel in flocks of 2d4 sheep: one ram and 3-4 ewes, the remainder being lambs (AC 8, MV 12, HD 1, #ATT nil). Lambs are born in the spring and achieve adulthood after two years; only one out of every three births is male. Rams tend to wander off on their own from time to time, but ewes have a piercing bleat that a ram can hear up to two miles away under good conditions (even farther in the mountains if the bleating echoes). Once a ram hears this bleating, it will stop at nothing to return to its flock and defend it while the flock flees.

Battering rams prefer rocky grasslands in hills and mountains, avoiding forests.

Ecology: These creatures are found in the roughest mountains in the wild, in areas where other sheep would be in danger from ettins or other large monsters. They are sometimes found in the possession of wizards, who *charm* them to rent them out as military weapons (with mixed results). Some mountain-dwelling folk have managed to domesticate these sheep, but they cannot keep them penned as the rams like to butt down the fences and gates.

Gorse

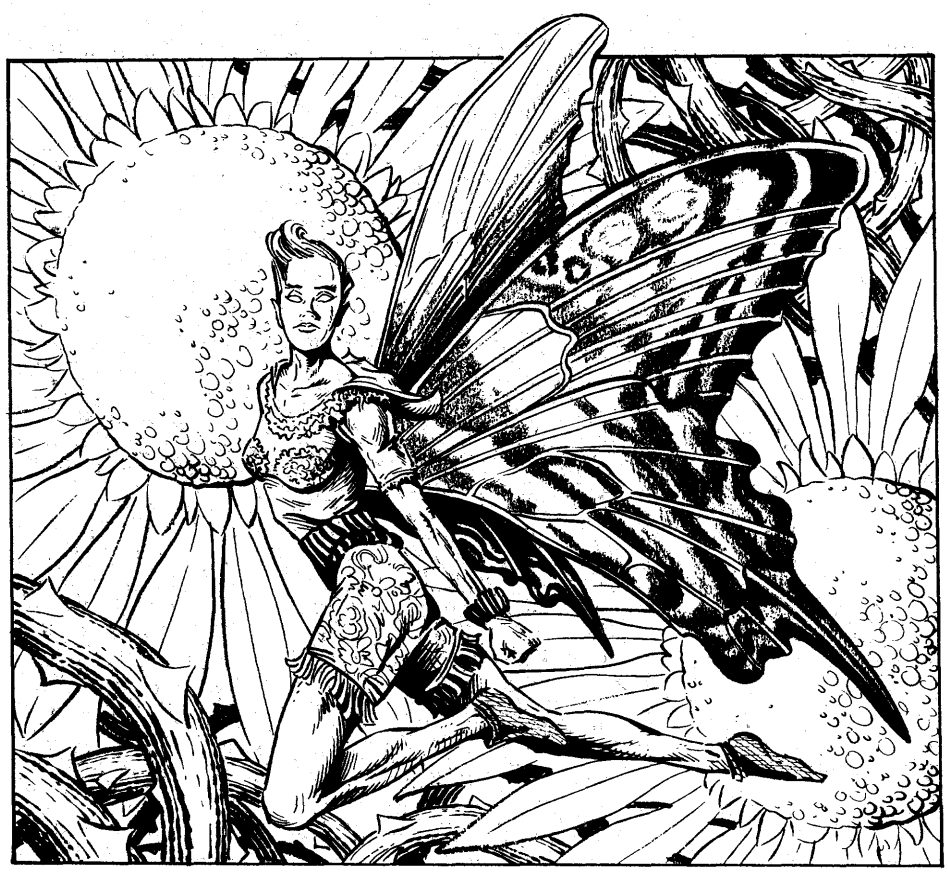
CLIMATE/TERRAIN: *Subarctic to temperate/Grasslands, hills, and prairies*
FREQUENCY: *Uncommon*
ORGANIZATION: *Tribe*
ACTIVITY CYCLE: *Day*
DIET: *Herbivore*
INTELLIGENCE: *Very (11-12)*
TREASURE: *O, P, Q, S*
ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*
NO. APPEARING: *5d8*
ARMOR CLASS: *6 (2 in flight)*
MOVEMENT: *3, Fly 12 (A)*
HIT DICE: *1 hp*
THAC0: *20*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1 weapon*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Poison*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Minor spell use, lair traps*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *5%*
SIZE: *T (3" tall)*
MORALE: *Average (8)*
XP VALUE: *270 (420 with potion effects)*

By far the smallest of the faerie folk, and in some respects the most beautiful, is the gorse. Averaging one-quarter the height of a full-grown atomie, gorse must be secretive and unobtrusive to survive.

In appearance, gorse have the proportions and physical attributes of human children, although they are fully mature, with, the only differences being their height, their delicate wings, and their slightly pointed ears. They have no antennae, and their simple clothing is no different in appearance than that of most humans or elves. They prefer dressing in shades of green and yellow to blend in with their surroundings, which are most often gorse, a prickly evergreen shrub with yellow flowers.

Combat: Aside from using the defenses of their thorny homes (see "Habitat/Society"), gorse use a number of weapons in combat, all of which are manufactured from the bushes they tend. They have minute bows with a 30′ range, spears (10′ range), and swords, all of which do 1 hp damage on a hit. Because of the weapons' fine points and the skill of the gorse, all of these weapons are used at +2 to hit. In addition, 10% of all gorse arrows will be coated with a weak poison that causes confusion for 2d4 rounds if the victim fails a save vs. poison.

In addition to these mundane abilities, gorse have limited magical attacks and defenses available to them. Once per day, each gorse can cast the cantrips *exterminate* (to defeat threats that, while minor to humans, are major to things the size of gorse), *sprout* (usable only on thorn bushes but useful in blocking a miniature path through a bush), and *distract* (see details on these cantrips in the AD&D 1st Edition volume, *Unearthed Arcana*, pages 46 and 48). The latter spell, along with the spell *mirror image* (which they can also each cast once daily) is used to confuse an enemy long enough to allow to escape. One gorse in 10 can also cast one *spike growth* and a *goodberry* spell daily to be used in defending the lair and bribing intelligent creatures not to attack them. All spell effects are at 10th level.



Habitat/Society: Gorse prefer to dwell in the green, thorny flower-bushes they're named after, making lairs forbidding to most predators too large to maneuver through the thorns as the gorse do. If creatures larger than twice their height attempt to enter their bushes, those creatures each take damage equal to 1 hp per round if of AC 6-10, or 1 hp every other round if of AC 4-5. Movement rates through gorse bushes for beings of size S to L are slowed to one-quarter normal; larger and smaller beings are unhampered. If threatened, gorse will retreat deeper into their bushes, luring attackers through the most thickly thorned regions and possibly over logs, pits, and other hard-to-see natural obstacles.

Although they must be wary of all bigger folk (and almost all creatures are big to them), gorse can be persuaded to deal with woodland-dwellers (e.g., dryads, satyrs, and centaurs), humans, and demihumans who bring them gifts of fresh fruit, bread, or milk. They become protective of any who do them favors, such as druids who defeat menacing beasts or elves who stop forest fires. Often a gorse tribe will send a few members to accompany its larger allies for the duration of the latter's stay near their lair.

Some gorse tribes have magical potions in their treasure troves. Because of the gorse's small size, one standard dose of a potion equals 20 doses for the gorse. Thus, it is not uncommon to find a large group of these faeries who can *polymorph* themselves, *resist fire*, or turn *rainbow hues* at will for short periods of time. Some potions, such as the various control potions, will not work unless a full dose is taken, and no gorse could swallow that great a quantity of any liquid; these potions will be undisturbed in their hoards and will often be traded for more useful ones or used as bribes or rewards for bigger folk.

Gorse have their own language but are willing and able to speak the tongues of sprites or pixies. A sylvan elf would know enough of their language to conduct a halting conversation with them, as would any druid from the same region as the gorse in question.

Quakedancer

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: *Subarctic to subtropical/Plains, prairies, grasslands*
FREQUENCY: *Rare*
ORGANIZATION: *Solitary*
ACTIVITY CYCLE: *Day*
DIET: *Omnivore*
INTELLIGENCE: *Semi- (2)*
TREASURE: *Nil*
ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*
NO. APPEARING: *1*
ARMOR CLASS: *6*
MOVEMENT: *6*
HIT DICE: *See Quakedancer Growth Table*
THAC0: *See Quakedancer Growth Table*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1 bite and 1 stomp*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *See Quakedancer Growth Table*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Stunning, swallowing whole*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Nil*
SIZE: *See Quakedancer Growth Table*
MORALE: *Steady (12)*
XP VALUE: *See Quakedancer Growth Table*

The quakedancer (a.k.a. quakebeast, quakemaker, thunderer) is a large reptilian beast that resembles a *Brontosaurus*, except for the fact that it has six legs. It is not a true dinosaur. The middle pair of legs have thick-clawed toes that point outward, both forward and backward, and oversized knee joints, while the feet of the other, normal pairs of legs are broader at the base than would be expected of a true sauropod of comparable size.

While it looks like a herbivore, the quakedancer is really omnivorous, eating plants only as a ruse to convince true plant-eaters that it is harmless. It doesn't have the specialized equipment of other meat-eaters (oversized claws and fangs, camouflage coloring, powerful legs to run down its prey, etc.). It hunts by means of its unique ability to create a miniature earthquake in its immediate vicinity.

Combat: When hungry (which is often), the quakebeast pretends to be a normal sauropod, vacuously grazing on the greenery until a good number of unsuspecting creatures are within range doing the same thing, attracted by the illusion of safety the quakedancer provides. The quakedancer then roots the toes of its middle legs into the ground and balances its large body on these two pivots. Slowly at first, then faster and faster, it rocks back and forth from its front legs to its back like a living see-saw, pumping with its neck and tail to produce more force, resoundingly crashing its bulk down with each swing.

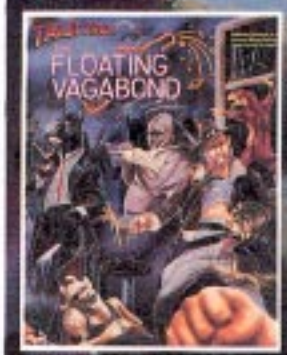
The impact produced by this constant ground-pounding creates nerve-shattering shock waves in the beast's vicinity, stunning unlucky creatures smaller than itself that happen to be too close to it. It takes 3-6 rounds of rocking to warm up to the stunning attacks. Creatures within range must make a save vs. paralysis every round that the quakedancer maintains its stunning attack (it makes only one stomp per round) or be stunned for 2d4 rounds; details on what creature sizes are affected and the range of the attack are given in the Quakedancer Growth Table. Stunning effects are cumulative to a maximum of 20 rounds. Once sufficient stunned prey is present for the quakedancer's appetite (about 2d6 creatures of the largest size it can affect, or more of smaller sizes), it will cease its stomping



You Can Lead a Patron to Water...

But you can't make him drink light beer. Not at The Floating Vagabond. Not on your life. You see, The Floating Vagabond's known for its volatile mix of colorful characters, and they don't take lightly to watered-down adventures like you get with most roleplaying games. No, sir!

Around here "Happy Hours" means just that: hours of fun and flaming wreckage, loads of laughs and smoking ruins. It means marauding, thieving, and brawling...you know: good, clean, wholesome fun. After all, isn't that what roleplaying's all about?



Now serving BAR WARS, THE REICH STUFF and ADVENTURE WITH NO NAME!

It's in the Water!

Available at discriminating game, book, and hobby shops or call:

TALES FROM THE FLOATING VAGABOND *by Avalon Hill!*

In the UK: Chart Hobby Distributors
Station Road, East Preston, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN16 3AG
903-773170

IN U.S.
Avalon Hill Games
1-800-999-3222
IN JAPAN
Hobby Japan
03-354-9341
IN GREECE
P. Mamalis, Ludo
66-41-692
IN SPAIN
Joc International
93-345-8565
IN FRANCE
Jeux Descartes: 464-84820
Jeux Actuels: 322-62257
IN ITALY
F. Ferrari: 488-000319
Stratelibri: 0039-2-295-10317
IN NETHERLANDS
999 Games: 31-20-644-5794
American Disc't Book: 020-255537
IN GERMANY
Welt der Spiel: 069-3-80-80-88
Games Inc: 895-234666
Das Spiel: 404-48687

Quakedancer Growth Table

Age	0-1 years	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4-5 years	5-6 years	6-7 years	7+ years
Hit dice	1	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
Size	2′-10′ S-L	10′-20′ H	20′-30′ H	30′-40′ G	40′-50′ G	50′-60′ G	60′-70′ G	70′-80′ G
THAC0 (stunned)	20 (nil)	16 (12)	12 (8)	8 (4)	4 (0)	0 (-4)	- 4 (-8)	- 8 (-12)
Bite damage	1d2	1d4	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12	1d12 + 1d2	1d12 + 1d4
Stomp damage	nil	1d8	2d8	3d8	4d8	5d8	6d8	7d8
Quake radius	nil	10′	20′	30′	40′	50′	60′	70′
Max. size of prey stunned	nil	T	S	S	M	L	L	H
XP value	15	270	1,400	5,000	9,000	13,000	17,000	21,000

and automatically swallow its stricken prey whole at the rate of one creature per round. No to-hit roll is needed for such swallowing; moving prey is ignored unless it attacks, in which case the quakedancer attempts to stomp and bite the victim. A swallowed victim either dies from suffocation (as per the rules on breath-holding in the *Player's Handbook*, page 122; monsters use twice their hit dice for an equivalent constitution score) or takes 3d8 hp damage per round from the beasts' stomach acids, starting on the third round after the victim is swallowed.

Habitat/Society: Quakedancers are careful to hunt only in level, stable areas away from other predators, in order to prevent two possible threats: scavengers outside quake range darting in to snatch their hard-earned prey, or quaking in unstable areas that could open crevasses and rockslides rendering prey inaccessible. As they get older, and larger, quakedancers relax this "rule," as terrain that would seem imposing to a 6′ human is much less so to a 50′ quakedancer.

These beasts have no lairs, as the repeated devastation of a single region would mark it as too dangerous to enter. Instead, they are constantly on the move looking for new hunting grounds where they are not feared by the local wildlife. A person with the Tracking proficiency could follow a quakedancer with ease, even years after it left an area, following the trail of slowly eroding wounds in the earth until he found the quake-producing beast at work.

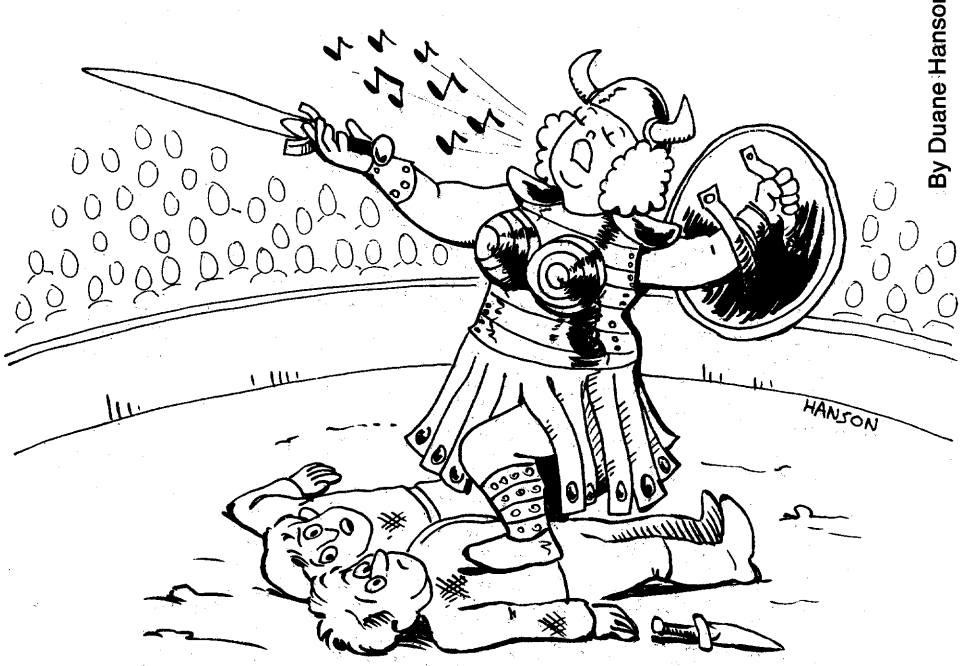
Annually, a quakedancer lays a cluster of 2d10 eggs in a shallow burrow at the center of a newly devastated area (these areas are often shunned for some time by other creatures that might threaten the 4′-foot-long eggs). After laying the eggs, the female quakedancer abandons them, as the male quakedancer abandoned her weeks before. Most of these eggs successfully hatch, but few of the young survive to see their first year, being eaten by predators or their clutch-mates.

As hatchling quakedancers haven't the mass to use the quake-making attack of adults, newborn quakedancers quickly scurry for cover after hatching, surviving that first year on a diet of vegetation, insects, and other small creatures. Those living through the trying first year are able to use their quaking ability to stun Tiny creatures in their near vicinity, and their success is virtually assured from this point on. Quakedancers grow shockingly fast. Sexual maturity does not arrive until their fifth year, at which point they are as much as 50′ in length and well able to clear an area for egg-laying.

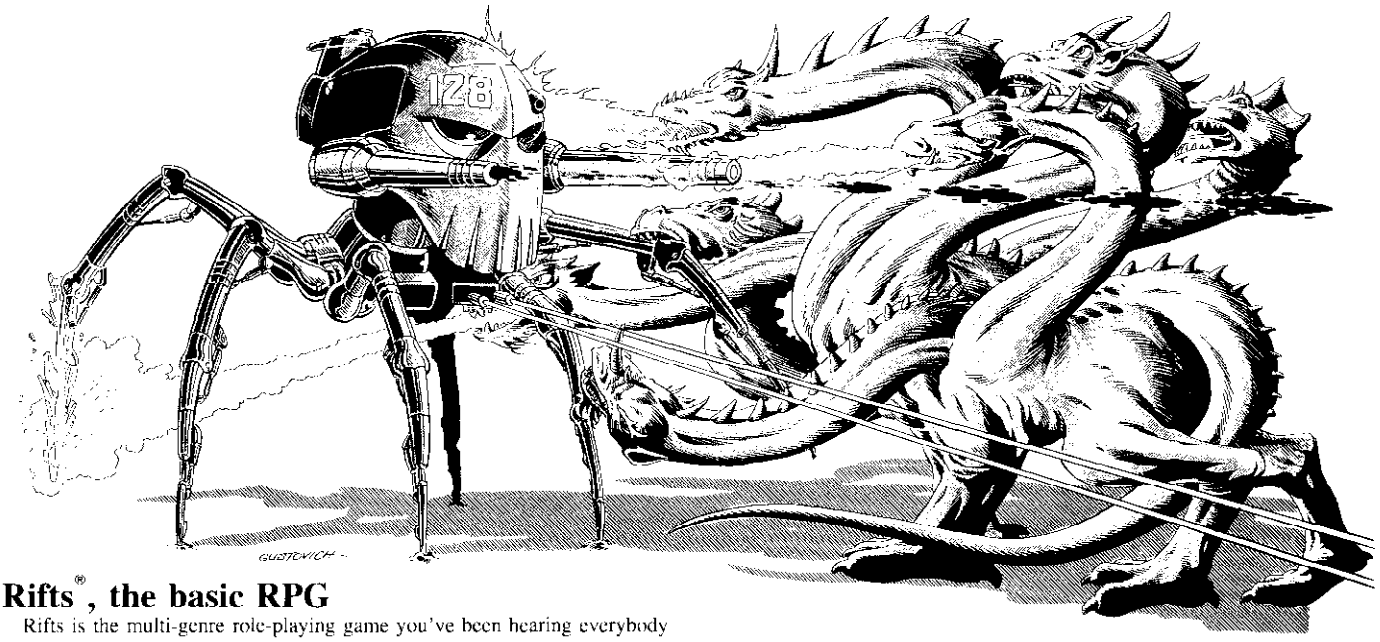
Ecology: Though their actions appear highly destructive, in the long run a quakedancer has only a slight effect on its environment. Wildlife returns to a devastated area soon after the quakedancer leaves, and it does not overhunt, as much of its stunned prey usually escapes upon recovery. Streams and rivers may have their courses altered, and once in a while a quakedancer might accidentally trigger a more severe disaster with its movements (e.g., landslide, avalanche, natural earthquake, flooding after dam collapse, etc.). Civilized beings who rely on fixed urban and agricultural areas find these beings to be highly troublesome, however, and quakedancers are hunted into extermination in most areas.

Although quakedancer eggs are easy to find if one knows where to look, they have little market value considering the potentially devastating effects a few years after they hatch. Some unscrupulous individuals will sell the eggs as something else (e.g., dragon eggs), while others have sent them as anonymous gifts to their enemies. Cities that have suffered through such pranks usually institute strict laws against the importation, marketing, and possession of these time bombs.

At the other end of their life-cycle, rumors claim that quakedancers never die of old age; they can be brought down by predators, adventurers, disease, natural disaster, or even larger members of their own species, but if none of these factors intrudes, they just continue to grow without cease. In regions where such legends are widespread, all earthquakes are attributed either directly to gargantuan quakedancers passing through, or indirectly to the passage of the semi-mythical First Quaker, which supposedly roams far-off regions but still causes local earthquakes by way of transmitted shockwaves and aftershocks. Ω



"I guess it's true what they say—
it's not over till the fat lady sings!"



Rifts®, the basic RPG

Rifts is the multi-genre role-playing game you've been hearing everybody talking about. The game captures the elements of magic and the supernatural and combines them with science fiction and high technology.

The Palladium mega-damage system applies to both magic and technology, creating super powerful characters of all kinds. The fact that the same basic RPG system links *all* of our games means that players can bring in any Palladium character from any Palladium role-playing game.

The Earth has been inadvertently transformed by a cataclysmic event that nearly obliterated humankind. It is approximately 200 years later (nobody knows for sure). Human beings are emerging out of a dark age to reclaim the planet. A strange and alien Earth inhabited by unimaginable, and sometimes terrible, creatures.

Highlights Include:

- **Nearly 30 exciting and unique Occupational Character Classes including the Cyber-Knight, Borgs, Glitter Boys, Psi-Stalkers, Dog Pack (mutant humanoid dogs), Crazies, and many others.**
- **Supernatural creatures. Some, like the Dragon, are actually player characters, others are horrifying menaces from the rifts.**
- **Bionics and cybernetics offer a vast range of mechanical augmentation. Super-technology with mega-damage body armor, energy weapons, rail guns, power armor, and robots.**
- **256 pages! $24.95 plus $2.00 for postage. Available now at hobby shops and comic stores everywhere.**

RIFTS® World Book One: Vampire Kingdoms

Not only are vampires presented in a frightening, new light, but a wealth of new world information, cities, monsters and characters are presented. Vampire player characters too!

Highlights Include:

- **Vampires and their powers described in fantastic detail.**
- **Vampires as player characters!! Plus other aliens and D-Bees, like the monstrous Dragon Slayers, Jaguar People and others.**
- **Vampire Kingdoms and their plans for evil.**
- **Techno-wizard devices for slaying vampires, and other weapons.**
- **Creating travelling freak shows, carnivals and circuses. A source of adventure and evil.**
- **The mysterious Yucatan Peninsula, a place of demons and magic.**
- **Ley lines, nexus points and cities of note are all described and depicted on maps. The city of Juarez mapped and described in detail.**
- **$14.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling — 176 pages.**

Rifts® Conversion Book

The **Conversion Book** makes adaptation of magic, monsters, super-heroes/powers and characters from Palladium's other role-playing games instant and easy. Key characters and powers have been completely adapted to the world of **Rifts**, enabling players to simply insert them into their current **Rifts** campaign. Plus general rules for adapting everything Palladium has to offer.

Highlights Include:

- **Adult dragons and nearly 200 monsters, demons, deities and creatures from the pages of the Palladium Fantasy RPG, Monsters & Animals™ and Beyond the Supernatural™.**
- **40 optional, non-human player races.**
- **New mega-damage twists to magic and O.C.C.s like the Summoner, Diabolist, Witch, and Warlock.**
- **Powers and conversion stats for super-heroes, super-powers, and other elements from Heroes Unlimited™, Beyond the Supernatural™, Ninjas & Superspies™, and TMNT®.**
- **How to convert mega-damage robots and weapons from such games as Robotech™ and the Mechanoids®.**
- **Plus additional character and orientation rules, ideas, and recommendations.**
- **224 pages — All new artwork. Written by Kevin Siembieda.**
- **$19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.**

The Rifts® Sourcebook No. One

The **Rifts Sourcebook** was specially added to the **Rifts®** schedule to satisfy the needs and requests we had gotten from thousands of fans. And has been received with a frenzy of excitement. This particular volume might be considered "MORE." Why more? Because we give you more of everything!!

Highlights Include:

- **More details on the Coalition and how to play them as both good guy player characters and as NPC villains.**
- **More weapons, vehicles, and equipment, including the famous Triax super weapons of the German Republic. Ten new player bots and power armor!**
- **Ten new monsters, including the Splugorth Slavers.**
- **Robot Occupational Character Class (Optional O.C.C.). Robot NPCs, villains, and adventures. More world information.**
- **Written by Kevin Siembieda, art by Kevin Long.**
- **112 pages, $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.**

New Rifts® Books Coming Soon ...

Rifts Source Book Two: The Mechanoids®: A.R.C.H.I.E. is back and this time he's found some new friends, the Mechanoids. Will include adventures, adventure ideas, world data, new bots, and new and improved Mechanoids. Written by Kevin Siembieda; art by Newton Ewell.

Rifts World Books Two: Atlantis: Atlantis is the domain of the multi-dimensional slavers known as the Splugorth and the Minions of Splugorth. It is a domain where all manner of supernatural and other-dimensional life forms come to visit, live, or to purchase slaves and magic. It is a dangerous and mystical place. Will include dimensional travel and many surprises. Written by Kevin Siembieda, illustrated by Kevin Long. Available March 1992.

Copyright © 1992 Kevin Siembieda
Palladium Books®, Rifts®, Megaverse®, and the Mechanoids® titles are registered trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda.

Palladium Books®
Dept. D
5926 Lonyo Ave.
Detroit, Mi. 48210

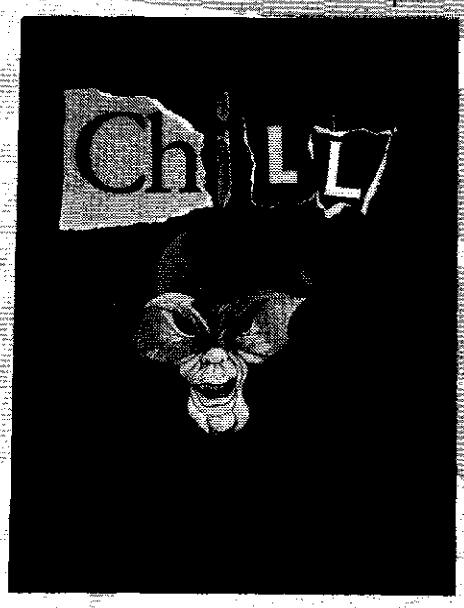
"You can't see it, but you sure can feel it."

It's simply a degree to many. A digital degree that numbs your brain and toes in the dead of winter, somehow making you colder than normal.

To others it's an entirely different degree . . . a degree of terror that grips your heart so suddenly and so tightly, you find yourself rooted in utter horror. . . .

THE Chill® FACTOR

It's the feeling you get when you play Chill, the role-playing game that puts the thrill of horror at your fingertips and sends it coursing to your toes.



Your imagination is the key to unlocking the horrible truth behind real-life mysteries. You'll shiver when you come face to face with the Sasquatch, the Jersey Devil, Jack the Ripper and many others. You'll shake when you explore the origins of voodoo, cannibalism and other phenomena.

And you'll quake deciding the degree of excitement needed to overcome such terrifying individuals and concepts.

Experienced game masters and players alike will be challenged by the realism inherent in this award-winning game. Chill is also easy to learn and play; a scenario is included with the hardcover book that explains the game to new and advanced players.

And that's just the beginning. Chill is supported by a vast array of sourcebooks and scenarios that let you control the temperature of the game.

So if you've never tried Chill, or are tired of the hot and cold aspects of other role-playing games, pick up a copy of Chill today at a fine book, comic, game or hobby store near you.



Watch for: Undead & Buried. In this 64-page scenario, the Chill Master decides if SAVE, the secret organization dedicated to ridding the world of Unknown forces, lives or dies! For 4 to 6 players. Available in April.

Mayfair Games Inc.

by Skip Williams

Sage advice

If you have any questions on the games produced by TSR, Inc., "Sage Advice" will answer them. In the United States and Canada, write to: Sage Advice, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Sage Advice, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. We are no longer able to make personal replies; please send no SASEs with your questions (SASEs are being returned with writers' guidelines for the magazine).

What's the most unusual question the sage has ever been asked? It might be here in this month's column on the AD&D® game. Just in case any readers are wondering, I have reason to suspect the sincerity of only one of the following questions, and that's because I know the two guys who sent it in. The rest are as legitimate as any other question "Sage Advice" gets. First, two questions get "re-saged"; then we'll try to make some sense out of the prattle.

A few issues ago, you said only elven fighter/mages can wear elven chain mail without restriction. However, if you look under elven chain mail in the Dungeon Master's Guide (page 182), it says, "Its lightness and flexibility allow even magic users and thieves to use it with few restrictions. . . . Elven fighter/mages use it without restriction." What are the few restrictions for mages?

This is a misprint. The line should read: "Its lightness and flexibility allow even bards and thieves to use it with few restrictions." This official correction has already appeared in more recent printings of the *DMG*.

In the core AD&D 2nd Edition rules, mages cannot wear armor unless they are elven fighter/mages. However, it seems to me that half-elven cleric/mages, fighter/mages, and fighter/mage/clerics also could function while wearing elven chain mail. Mage/thieves and fighter/mage/thieves could probably also wear elven chain mail since straight thieves can—but don't forget to apply the penalties to thieving abilities from Table 29, page 39, in the *Player's Handbook*.

In "Sage Advice" in issue #156, you said a heavy catapult and a trebuchet were two different things. However, the SPELLJAMMER™ boxed set's *Concordance of Arcane Space* (page 40) says that a heavy catapult is a trebuchet. Also, if trebuchets can hurl rocks weighting 500 lbs., how can they be fitted onto spelljammers? If a trebuchet is a separate item, how much does it cost? How big would a ship have to be to have one? What are this weapon's other statistics?

I didn't actually say that catapults and trebuchets were different in issue 156, but they are according to the histories I've read. Technically, a catapult is a torsion-powered siege engine. A catapult's torsion (twisting or springing) power was usually provided by either tightly wrapped skeins of horsehair or layers of green boards arranged like the leaf springs on an automobile's suspension.

To get an idea of how a twisted-skein catapult worked, stretch a rubber band between your thumb and forefinger. Now take a *capped* ballpoint pen or unsharpened pencil and stick it between the two strands of rubber. If you flip the pen end over end a few times like an airplane propeller, you'll twist and tighten the rubber band; you'll have to slide the pen in and out a bit (because your hand will be in the way) to rotate the pen fully. When you've got the rubber band really tight (and aimed away from your face), let go. The rubber band will flip the pen over quite forcefully. The catapult's skeins were tightened by men on either side of the catapult who turned cranks connected to the skeins, tightening them up without moving the catapult arm, which was held back. Once the arm was released, the torsion in the twisted skeins flung the arm in an arc that was stopped by a crosspiece on the machine itself; the ammunition, which had been placed in a cup on the end of the arm, was then hurled away.

The leaf-spring catapult worked just like a big crossbow. In fact, the only difference between this kind of siege engine and a ballista (which worked exactly like a big crossbow) was that a catapult had a long arm with a cup or pouch at one end for throwing stones in a high arc; in place of the arm, a ballista had a slide that hurled a rock or large bolt in a flat arc.

A trebuchet, however, was powered by a counterweight. A long beam was placed on a pivot, with one end of the beam a lot closer to the pivot than the other. A heavy weight was hung at the beam's short end, and a pouch for holding rocks was hung on the other, then tied down; the whole weight of the short end was always far greater than the entire weight of the long end and its ammunition. When a loaded trebuchet was fired by releasing the long end, the weight snapped the long end upward, and the rock in the pouch was hurled away. If you've ever seen a troupe of acrobats working with a seesaw, you've got the idea.

In historical terms, the SPELLJAMMER setting's light catapult probably is similar to the historical onager, a small twisted-skein torsion engine that hurled a rock that weighed about 10 lbs. The medium catapult probably is similar to a larger skein- or leaf-spring torsion engine that hurled a 25-lb. rock (in landsman's terms, this would be a heavy catapult; the SPELLJAMMER setting has adopted its own terminology). The spacefarers heavy catapult, or "trebuchet," would be a very large torsion engine hurling a 40- or 50-lb. rock; page 40 of the *Concordance* defines catapults as "large, stone-throwing devices operated by springs, cranks, or flywheels." I doubt that very large counterweight engines could be used on spelljammers at all, except on dwarven citadels and other massive bodies of 300 tons or more. If you want to introduce such weapons into your campaign, you're on your own.

As a general rule of thumb, I suggest that doubling the weight of the missile should increase the hull damage to the next higher step. For example, a weapon hurling an 80-lb. rock would do 2d6 hull points. Each increment of increased damage should cost an extra 300-400 gp, reduce the THAC0 by one (20 maximum), take one extra crew, reduce the rate of fire by one, and increase the weapon's "count" by one. So, our "80-pounder" would cost 1,300-1,400 gp, require five or six crewmen, have a THAC0 of 19, have a rate of fire of 1/3 or 1/4, and would count as three large weapons installed. I suggest that you do not allow the critical-hit numbers and crew-damage ratings to increase beyond the heavy catapult's 18-20 and 3d10 values.

I have a 6"-tall dual-classed fighter-monk. When he was a fighter, he was permanently *basted*, then he was shrunk. To make up for his limited choice of weapons due to his size, I made him a monk. At 5th level, *haste* and *slow* spells don't affect monks. Since the character was *hasted* as a fighter, will the effect remain? If so, will *boots of speed* improve his movement rate, if he can find a pair that will fit?

If you think a 6"-tall character can't do much damage with a fighter's traditional weapons, you're right—especially if he fights any foe larger than a cockroach.

However, diminutive swords, battle axes, and the like still do more damage than tiny fists and feet. (I suppose a 6" monk wearing a *girdle of giant strength* might be able to do some interesting things with judo throws; a cartoon character called Atom Ant comes to mind.)

Strictly speaking, the haste effect ends as soon as the character becomes a 5th-level monk; the discipline and control the monk imposes on his body forces it to return to its normal (non - *hasted* or non-*slowed)* state. Also, most campaigns disallow permanent *haste* effects, as they tend to unbalance play. Furthermore, this combination tends to burn out characters, as it magically ages the character in either edition of the AD&D game. In the original game, a *haste* recipient not only ages a year, but also must make a *system shock* roll or perish. In either edition of the game, I recommend that the permanently *hasted* character reroll for system shock periodically, like every day, week, or month; a character's body can take only so much abuse. Note also that the character should age at least twice the normal rate, and the DM would not be out of line to rule that the character actually ages an extra year every hour, week, or month.

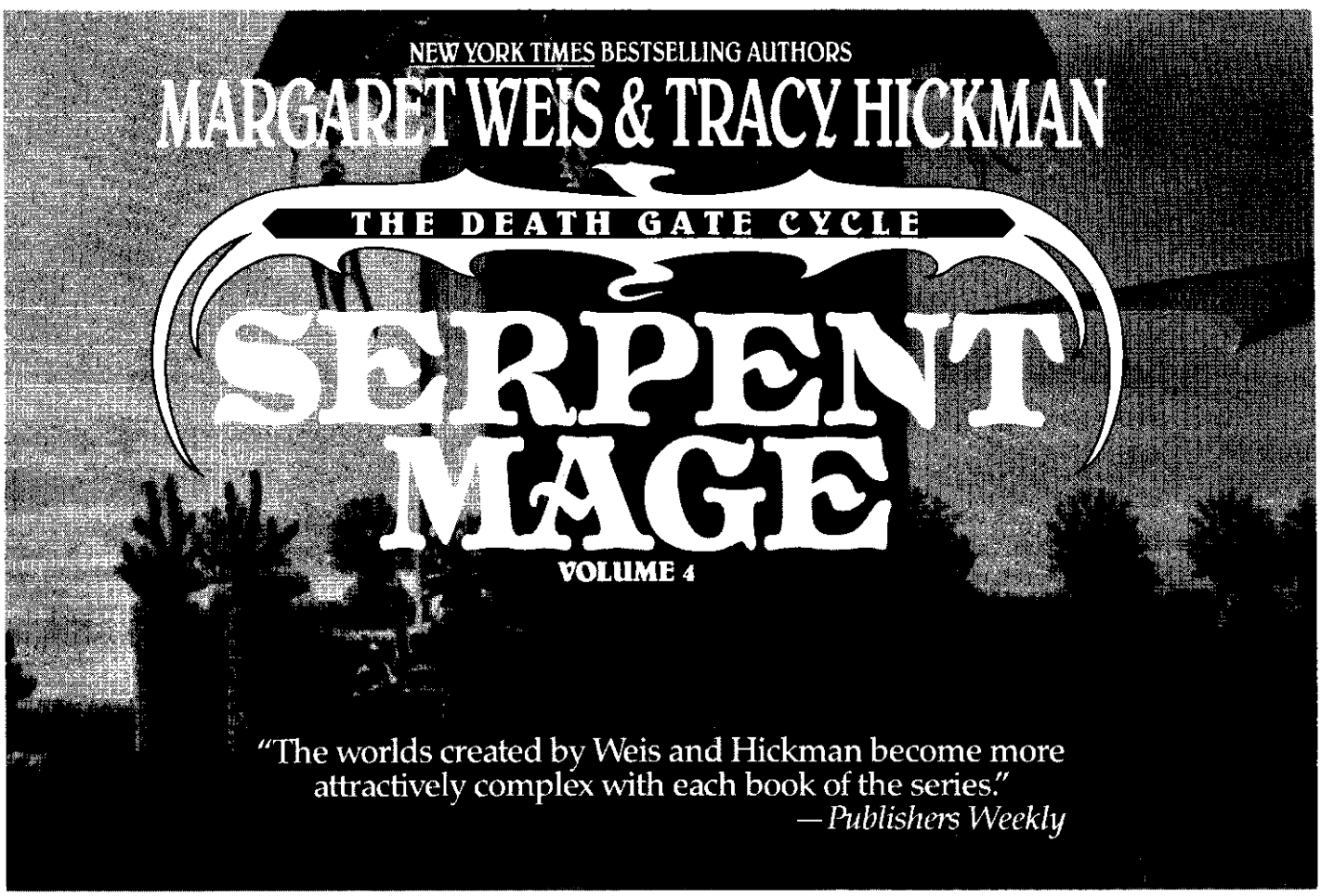
Generally speaking, similar magical effects are not cumulative in either edition of the AD&D game. A second *haste* spell will not affect a *hasted* character in either edition, nor can a *hasted* character benefit from a potion of *speed*. Likewise, *boots of speed* bestow a base movement rate (subject to encumbrance penalties) of 24. If the wearer already moves that fast or faster, he gets no benefit from the boots no matter where the superior movement rate comes from. As it happens, your 5th-level monk has a movement rate of 19, which the boots can boost to 24, no higher.

Can you *shape* change a tarrasque into a little bunny, then eat it for dinner? If a human was *polymorphed* into a bunny and some of the bunny's fur was taken, then the bunny was *polymorphed* back into a human, would the fur sample turn back into human hair or would it stay bunny fur? In other words, will a *lightning bolt* spell blow up in my wizard's face if he uses the bunny fur as a material component?

First, in either edition of the AD&D game, the tarrasque is a unique creature. A DM can decide that a whole race of tarrasques populates the world, but there are more original ways to challenge player characters. Second, *shape change* works only on the caster/user, so no one can use it like a *polymorph other* spell; if *shape change* could be used on creatures other than the caster, it would give the recipient the ability to change its shape and all such changes would be under the recipient's control, not the caster's, I'm not sure what form a tarrasque would choose if it could *shape change* itself, but it wouldn't be likely to bring any joy to the spell-caster, whatever that shape happened to be.

Of course, even a tarrasque might fall victim to a *polymorph other* or *polymorph any object* spell. In either edition of the AD&D game and in the D&D game, a *polymorphed* creature keeps its hit points, natural armor class, and possibly other purely physical abilities; in the tarrasque's case this includes regeneration and maybe even its limb-severing bite. So, your tarrasque/bunny still is one tough customer: A 300-hp bunny with AC - 3, at least two attacks (bite and kick), and a legendary regeneration ability. Even if one managed to eat this creature, you'd still need a *wish* to keep it dead (see the tarrasque's description in the *Monstrous Compendium*, volume 2).

Since *polymorphed* creatures assume their normal shape when killed, I suggest that any pieces cut from them change back, too. After all, being separated from the rest of the creature is a "death" of a sort. In the case of the tarrasque/bunny, the creature would change back when reduced to -30 hp, or perhaps any time after being reduced to below zero hit points if the DM so decides. This method clears up esoteric questions such as, "Can I



use *polymorphed* human hair as a material component for a *lightning bolt* spell?" It also keeps player characters from using *polymorph* magic as a cheap shortcut when creating scrolls, potions, and other magical items.

Suppose an explosive dimensional *mine* is thrown into an extradimensional *flatbox* at the exact instant the *disintegration chamber* it inhabits is activated. The resulting confluence of dimensions destroys the contents of the *flatbox* and opens a rift to the Astral plane. Now, the real question is: Do the magically shrunk, mated pair of immortal astral dragons that were sleeping inside the *flatbox* instantly recover all their lost hit points (because they are immortal), and if so where do the dragons wind up after the explosion and rift formation?

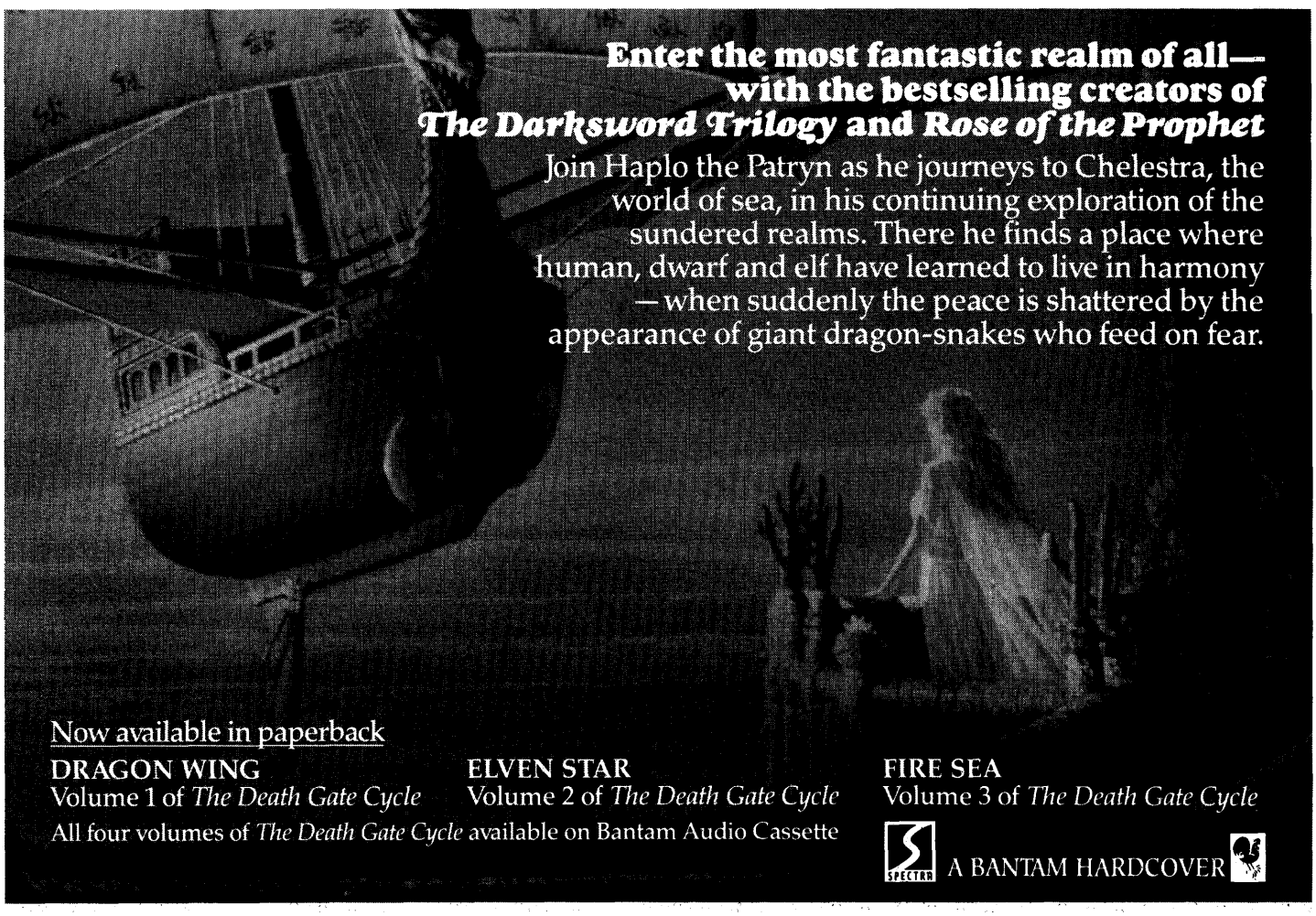
You're definitely misreading the descriptions of the magical items involved here (all three are from the *Tome of Magic*, pages 136-137). *Dimensional mines* are inert until placed inside extradimensional spaces. Even then, a *dimensional mine* does not explode; it ruptures the extradimensional space, and any matter inside the space is spewed into the Astral plane. The effect does not damage the contents of the space. *Flatboxes* don't inhibit magic at all, though by their very nature they cannot be illuminated. A disintegration chamber produces no spectacular effects when brought into an extradimensional space, and it cannot destroy anything that is not inside it (even then, nothing happens until somebody pushes the button).

In the situation you describe, the *flatbox* could explode when the *dimensional mine* was tossed inside, as the *flatbox* is an extradimensional space that has a bad habit of exploding when it's disturbed. However, it does not have to explode; it could just be ruptured. The *disintegration chamber* would be utterly destroyed in such an explosion, and the dragons would survive and get sucked through the rift and tossed onto the Astral plane. Whether the dragons were inside the *disintegration chamber* when it was activated is irrelevant, as their immortality (see their description in the *Monstrous Compendium*, DRAGONLANCE® appendix) allows them to survive being simultaneously "destroyed" and *disintegrated.*

If a thief lost an arm just below the elbow, would he still be able to wear a magical bracer on the stump? Could he wear a bracer over a prosthesis? What effect would the loss have on the character's thief abilities? If he originally weighed 115 lbs., what would his new weight be?

Bracers are made to be worn on the wrist or forearm. Individual DMs are free to decide if amputee characters can use bracers (and other items that must be worn) by wearing them on stumps or prostheses. Check out "Sage Advice" in issue #172 for a discussion of where various types of magical equipment are normally worn.

The DM must decide whether the loss of a limb or appendage will affect thieving abilities at all. There's no reason to assume that the character cannot simply adapt and go on performing just as before. If the DM isn't feeling this generous, I suggest a penalty of 5-25 on all applicable percentile thieving abilities. For example, the one-handed thief mentioned above will suffer no penalties to his ability to hear noise, move silently, or hide in shadows, as he doesn't need to use his arms and hands to do these things. The character might suffer a penalty to pick pockets or find and remove traps. The DM could decide that this one-handed character has fewer options when picking pockets, and he could assess a - 5 penalty to his percentile chance for success. The DM also might decide that rogues don't use their hands much when finding traps, but that two hands are helpful when removing traps, and so assigns no penalty to "find" and a - 10 to "remove." Finally, the DM might



decide to assign a - 15 penalty to climb walls, since the character's remaining three appendages are going to be very busy when the character is climbing. If penalties are assessed, I strongly suggest that the DM give the character an opportunity to acquire some adaptive equipment and a chance to practice using it. The easiest way to simulate this is to use the "Training" optional rule (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 49).

As to the loss of weight, the character should lose about 4% of his total weight (4.6 lbs., in this case) for losing roughly half an arm. "Sage Advice" discussed this calculation in issue #156 (see the "legless gnome" question).

Exactly how many gnomes can an adult griffon carry without losing its speed or altitude, physical attacks or fearsome temperament?

A typical gnome, without equipment, weighs about 82.5 lbs., but this figure can be as little as 73 lbs. or as much as 92 lbs. *(Player's Handbook*, page 24, Table 10). Carrying capacities for most flying creatures that can be used as mounts are conspicuous by their absence from the creatures' descriptions in the various *Monstrous Compendium* volumes. For the sake of game balance, I suggest that the most common flying mounts—pegasi, griffons, and hippogriffs—have the same carrying capacity. The Pegasus description in MC1 lists this as the same as a medium war horse: 220 lbs. at full speed, 330 lbs. at half speed, and 440 lbs. at one-third speed. As a general rule, a flying mount loses one maneuverability class when carrying a rider. I suggest that a winged mount loaded to the one-third movement class be unable to fly at all. Note that there is no reason a DM could not apply the movement rate and carrying capacity modifiers from the horse quality rules *(DMG*, pages 36-37) to flying mounts, too.

As to the question of a loaded griffon's temperament: Griffons are infamous for their nasty dispositions, and carrying loads doesn't make them any happier. Except for reductions to its maneuverability and movement, a griffon carrying a load still can fight normally. However, I suspect a griffon would strongly resent carrying multiple riders or being overloaded. Such a beast probably will try to shed—or even eat—excess riders.

Where can a wizard put a *sphere of annihilation* when he is not using it?

You can "put" a *sphere of annihilation* anywhere you want when you are not using it, just by commanding it to stop. Of course, somebody else could set it in motion again by trying to control it, so it behooves the owner to park his *sphere of annihilation* in a safe place, like a locked vault. (For an example of a creative use of a *sphere of annihilation* stored in this way, see "The Living City" in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine issue #52.)

Since the effect a *sphere of annihilation* will have on its surroundings can vary widely from campaign to campaign, it might be useful to discuss this item's properties in some detail. Simply put, a *sphere of annihilation* is a hole in the fabric of the multiverse. Like other holes, a *sphere of annihilation* is benign until something falls into it.

However, the strictest possible interpretation of a sphere's powers *(DMG*, page 180) yields a pretty terrifying point. Since anything that contacts the sphere is instantly sucked into the void and utterly destroyed, a *sphere of annihilation* moving through the air might be accompanied by a continuous rumble of thunder as the air it encounters is annihilated and more air rushes in to fill the vacuum. Even at rest, a *sphere of annihilation* might eventually strip a planet of its atmosphere as it annihilates each and every gas molecule that touches it. A single such sphere could drain oceans and maybe even gobble up stars and planets; if one does not place a size limit on what the sphere can annihilate, it could suck in the whole earth instantly just by touching the ground. The only way to safely store a sphere under these conditions would be to seal it into an airtight vault, where it eventually would annihilate the air around it and create a perfect vacuum. Nevertheless, a more responsible approach would be to destroy the sphere with a *rod of cancellation* as quickly as possible.

I think it's far more reasonable to assume that fluid matter, such as a body of water or an atmosphere, will tend to flow around the sphere rather than contacting it and being annihilated. Of course, air or water could be fanned or ladled into the sphere, where it would be annihilated. This effect is similar to what would happen if a *portable hole* was spread out on a sand beach. The hole displaces the sand without otherwise affecting it, and no sand falls into the hole unless it is pushed inside. I also suggest that a *sphere of annihilation* be unable to utterly destroy anything bigger than it is. If, for example, the character controlling the sphere plunges it into the earth or into a castle wall, the sphere bores a 2′ hole instead of sucking the entire "object" into oblivion. Likewise, small, man-sized, and large creatures might survive touching a sphere unless they fall completely into it. (See the previous question on "amputee thief" for possible consequences of misadventures with *spheres of annihilation.)* Tiny creatures probably don't have enough strength or mass to resist being sucked into a sphere if they are unfortunate enough to touch it. Ω





Join The Challenge
Join The RPGA™ Network

The RPGA Network is the best!

The biggest and best worldwide organization of game enthusiasts.

Members:

- Receive the award-winning, monthly POLYHEDRON® Newszine
- Can enter role playing tournaments
- Are eligible to enter special contests
- Learn about conventions and clubs
- Get great discounts on games and supplies
- Can find other gamers in their area
- Are people just like you.

Join today!

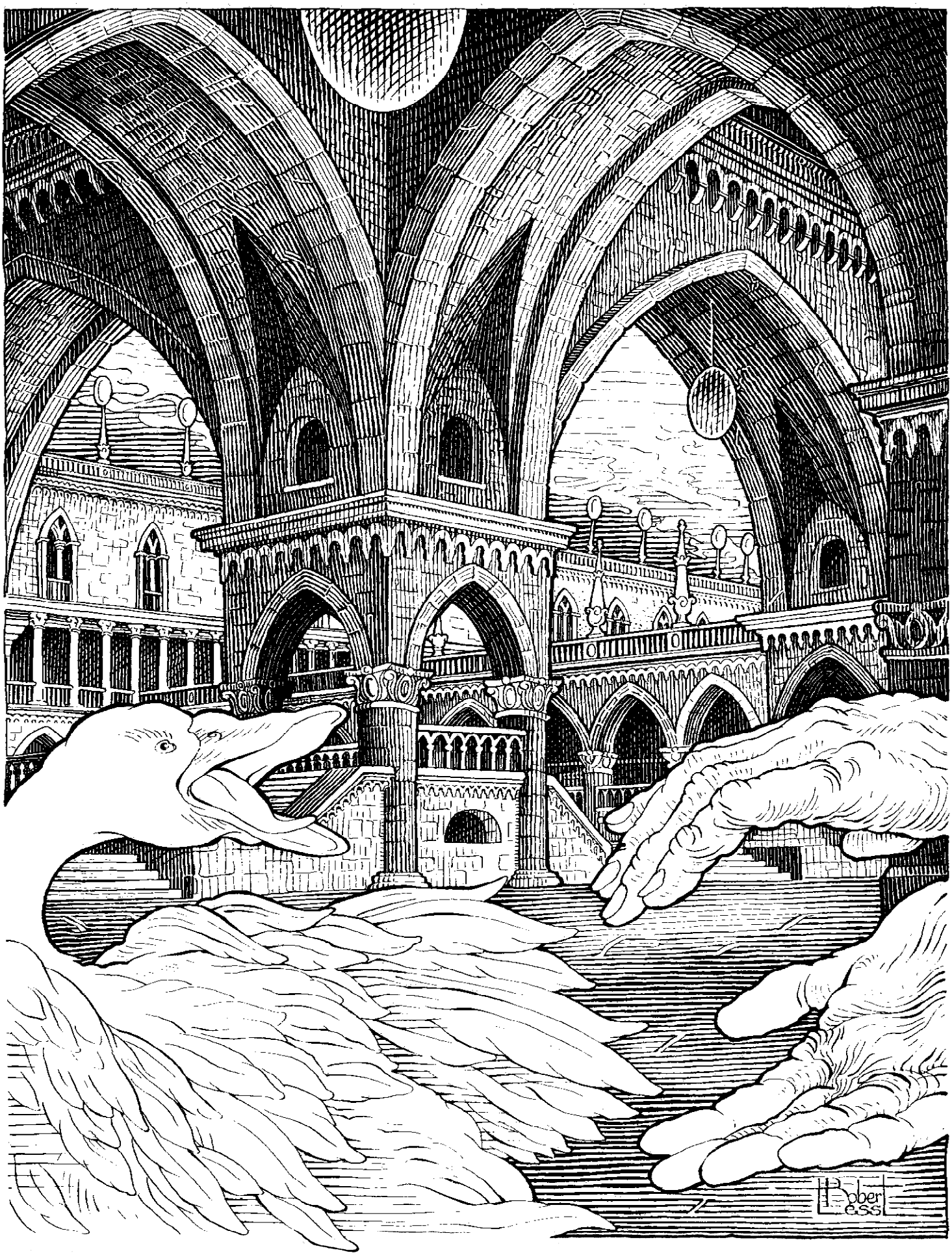
You can join by using the subscription card in this issue. If the card is missing, write to:

RPGA Network
P.O. Box 515
Lake Geneva, WI 53147 USA

If you have a VISA or MasterCard, you can join by calling 414-248-3625, ext. 511

RPGA®
NETWORK

POLYHEDRON and the RPGA logo are registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.
RPGA is a trademark owned by TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.


Robert Less

Murder Most Fowl

by Deborah Millitello



he Goose was dead. Anyone could see that. And the murderer had been caught plucking feathers. It all seemed like a simple case of theft with intent to feast. At least, that was how it appeared, but something told me there was more to this situation than just a hungry peasant stealing poultry.

First, the Goose wasn't an ordinary goose. It was the mainstay of Basilopolis' economy because it laid golden eggs. Yes, I said golden. You know, that yellowish metal that's used for the standard coinage of most countries. Instead of mining and refining gold as other countries did, Basilopolis' Keeper of the Treasury went to the Goose's nest twice a day and gathered eggs of solid pure gold. Sometimes one egg, sometimes two. No one could predict which.

A young beggar named Thom stood before me, bound so tightly his chest barely moved when he breathed. His patched, oversized clothes were as dirty as his gaunt face, and he stank worse than the filthiest stable I'd ever smelled. Dozens of guards surrounded him, some keeping back the crowd that filled the judgment hall, some intent on saving Thom for themselves. Lovely way to start a morning.

"Do you have anything to say in your defense?" I asked.

Thom crumpled to his knees and started to cry. When he spoke, his voice was higher than I'd expected. "Please, Your Highness, I didn't do it!"

"Your Honor," I corrected him. "I'm the King's Magistrate, not King Cannard the Fifth himself."

"Your Honor, I just found it layin' there by the wall," he sniffed and rubbed his cheek on his grimy shoulder, "an' its neck all twisted. I just picked it up an' took it back to my house an' started pluckin' it 'cause I was hungry an' I didn't do anything! I didn't, I didn't!" He started blubbering.

"Silence," I said, frowning. He sniffed back several sobs and gazed at me, trembling. "That's better. Now, what is the evidence against him?"

One of the king's guards opened a burlap sack and dumped the contents on the stone floor before the dais where I sat. A few feathers—long, white, and marked with a swirl of black—floated down beside a crude knife. "These were beside the prisoner when we found him, Your Honor, I saw him plucking the Goose myself. He's guilty, no doubt."

I looked at the feathers, then at the dead Goose, its neck broken. Only one goose in the kingdom, or in the world, had those black swirls on white wings. It was the royal golden-egg-laying Goose.

"Where was this man found?" I asked.

"Just beyond the north wall, close to Fern Wood. Bunch of thieves." The guard kicked Thom.

I glared at the guard. "Don't touch him, soldier, unless I tell you to."

The guard paled and swallowed visibly. Being half-brother to the king does have its advantages. Makes people very polite and civil.

I studied Thom. He looked as if he belonged in that

Illustrations by Bob Lessl

nest of hovels huddled between the castle and Fern Wood. "How did he get into the castle?" I asked.

The guard looked puzzled. "Well, he, uh, must've snuck in the gate."

"Have you checked with the gate wardens?"

"Um, no."

"Then I suggest you check with them."

The guard spoke to another soldier, who almost ran from the room, then he turned back to me. "Even if he didn't come in the gate, he could've climbed the wall."

"How? With what? Did you find any grappling hooks and rope in his house? Any ladders tall enough to reach the top?"

"Well . . . no. But we didn't search everywhere. Besides, he's guilty." He drew his foot back to kick Thom again, then stopped dead still, glanced at me, and put his foot on the floor. "The king knows it, the people know it, I know it. That gutter rat's a traitor! I say hang him and be done with it." The rest of the crowd cheered him.

I sighed, blinked my aching eyes, and ran my fingers through my short, graying hair. An hour's sleep wasn't enough for anyone, especially after an all-night feast. And I'd slipped away early. "Who discovered the Goose was missing?"

"I did, Your Honor." A buxom woman with masses of red curls stepped from the early morning shadows that darkened the hall. Her mouth was a little too narrow, her eyes a little too wide to be called beautiful, but she was attractive in a rough sort of way. And she was vaguely familiar.

"Who are you?" I asked, trying to remember where I'd seen her before.

She bowed low. "Marnie Sieler, Keeper of the Royal Goose, Your Honor."

Ah, yes, the original owner of the Goose. "Were you with the Goose when it was stolen?"

She hesitated for a moment, then said, "No, Your Honor."

"Where were you?"

"I went to speak with the husbandman about some new straw for the Goose's nest."

"Straw?" I closed my eyes and rubbed the lids. "At night?"

"He's busy during the day, watching after the royal herds and flocks."

I stared at her silently, just stared, letting the time pass. She looked away, back at me, at the ceiling, at me, at her hands, at me, shifted her weight from one foot to the other. I knew she was lying, and she knew I knew. "Is there anything else you have to say, Mistress Marnie?"

She scrunched her lips, glanced left and right, then shook her head. She knew more than she was saying. I'd have to talk to her again—after I'd talked with the husbandman.

I glanced across the soldiers in the room. "Are the Royal Goose Guards who were on duty last night present?"

Two soldiers stepped forward, wearing red tabards with golden eggs embroidered in the center of each. One man's left eye was swollen shut. He had scratches on his face and held his side. The other man's head was wrapped with white cloth. His nose was bent and twice the size it should be, and he walked with a limp. They tried to salute and grimaced.

"Tell me exactly what happened," I said.

The one-eyed soldier spoke first. "We was standing duty like always, when I heard a noise. Herman and me, we knew Mistress Marnie wasn't there, so we crept into the Goose's room and looked around, but it was dark, see? I mean we couldn't see too good, but the garden door was open, and we hurried quiet as mice to the door and looked out."

"An' we don't sees nobody at first, does we, George?" Herman broke in.

"Shut up, Herman," George growled, then continued. "We didn't see anyone at first, then I saw a shadow running for the wall. We ran after it, and suddenly we was attacked by two or three men . . ."

"Or live or six," Herman said.

George glared at his comrade. "Three or four, counting the first one we spotted. We fought and kicked and tried to stop them."

I shook my head slightly, disgusted. "Which was it: two, three, four, five, or six?"

"Four," said George.

"Six," said Herman.

Wonderful. The guards were as honest as Mistress Marnie. "Why didn't you call for help?"

"I started to," George said, glaring at Herman again, "but one of them grabbed me around the neck and cut off my breathing. I passed out not long after."

"An' I tries to stop them," Herman said, bobbing his head, "but they hits me on the head and knocks me out. I woked up when Mistress Marnie was shaking me and screaming the Goose was gone."

I glanced around the hall until I spotted Marnie standing beside the court wizard, Arcus Magnus. "Mistress Marnie, where did you find the guards?"

"On the porch leading from the Goose Chamber to the garden."

"And how long were you absent," I paused, a half smile threatening to escape my practiced detachment, "talking to the husbandman about . . . straw?" I think her face reddened, but I wasn't certain.

"An hour, maybe two," she said as she glanced at the wizard next to her. "Three at the most."

"Hah!" Herman said with a sly grin. "She'd been gone at least four or five hours before the fight."

Mistress Marnie started to reply but glanced at Arcus first. Interesting. "I . . . may've been gone that long," she said.

I didn't speak for several minutes, merely looked across the crowd. The people shuffled, jostled, grumbled to each other until at last I said, "So the Goose could have been stolen anytime during the night."

She nodded slowly. "I suppose that's so."

There were too many secrets, too many 'hows' and 'whys' to settle the case right then. I needed to check several things before I was satisfied I knew who had killed the Goose. "I must think on this for a time," I said as impassively as I could. "Take the prisoner away until I render my verdict."

The guards fairly grinned at that.

"And . . ." I said snowflake soft, "he will be unharmed until I determine his guilt or innocence. Do you understand?"

The guards muttered something but saluted me and dragged Thom from the hall. A servant stuffed the dead Goose, feathers, and knife in the burlap sack and carried it to the guarded chamber where I keep evidence during trials. The crowd wavered a few moments, then drifted out of the judgment hall.

I stood, stretched, and wished I'd had more sleep. My stomach churned, reminding me I'd eaten very little at the banquet and that it was past sunrise. Maybe after I'd checked out a few things, I'd go to the kitchen and see what Wild Bill could find for my breakfast.

I shuffled from the hall and headed toward the Goose Chamber. I wanted to see where the murder took place and maybe find something, anything, to confirm my suspicions. If Thom had crept inside and killed the Goose, there would be some sign of his presence. My stomach growled insistently, and I decided to visit the kitchen first.

I'd left the main corridor and turned toward the kitchen when suddenly Arcus Magnus stepped from a doorway. He was nearly a head shorter than I and stringy as a winter-starved deer. He moved like a shadow, silently, as if he had no true substance.

"Your Honor," he said in his low, oily voice, "if I could speak to you on a matter of importance?"

"What—" my voice cracked slightly as I swallowed my surprise, "what matter?"

"What is to be done with the Goose? I mean, what will happen to its body? Surely, it will not be roasted and eaten, not the royal Goose. It was unique, a treasure now lost for all time. If only I had been allowed to study it while it was alive, if I could have discovered what forces had combined to create such a marvelous bird. But no, I was never allowed to examine it, and now it is gone! Such foolishness, such waste!" His hands twitched like jumping spiders, and his sallow face was taut.

It was several moments before he looked at me again, his graying brows furrowed. "I am sorry for my outburst, Your Honor. I am distraught at the loss of so great a treasure to our city and our king. I know that I am being bold, but I request the Goose's body for study." He paused, then bowed a bit too quickly, as if he were nervous. "That is, if you would grant me this most extraordinary privilege. I should be exceedingly grateful." He gave me half a smile as his fingers played with a small but bulging leather pouch tied to his woven belt. The man had all the subtlety of a hammer.

"I will inform you of the king's wishes in this matter," I said, giving him my most daunting stare.

He cringed, shrank back, bobbed a bow, and hurried away. I don't think he wanted the king to know about the request. Hmm. Arcus, a suspect? Possible. I'd keep him in mind.

I walked toward the kitchen and paused at the doorway, hoping to spot something for breakfast. Wild Bill was propped on his sturdy stool, gulping a mug of something. Greenish-gold mead trickled from the sides of his wide mouth and added another layer of stains to his broad apron. It always surprised me that the man could drink half a barrel by himself and still turn out a meal lit for a king. And Bill had been doing it for years, since the campaign against the Wildmen of the Western Steppes. That was when he'd earned his nickname, fighting with a sword in one hand and an iron skillet in the other, howling like a Wildman.

"I'm hungry," I said.

Bill choked, dropped the nearly empty mug, then turned pale when he saw me. "What?" he croaked. His breath forced me back a step.

"I'm hungry," I repeated. "Is breakfast ready yet?"

He glanced around the kitchen slowly, his eyes wide as if he'd just that moment realized where he was. "Breakfast? No. I mean, yes. There's some honeyed bread in the oven, should be done by now."

He staggered to the brick oven in the wall beside the great hearth and opened the iron door. Heat flooded the room, and with it came the fragrance of yeast and honey and spice. Using a wooden paddle, Bill removed two flattened rounds of golden bread, slid them onto a table top, went back, and kept taking out rounds until a dozen lay cooling on the wooden table. He broke one of the first rounds in half and gave it to me.

I took a bite and smiled. Delicious as always. I'd never been dissatisfied with his cooking, except last night at the banquet. The beef had been roasted to tender perfection, but the stuffing he'd served with it was, well, inappropriate. Made with apples, raisins, and no sage. I'm very partial to sage. And no poultry had been served, although the venison had been excellent. I suppose one disappointment in twenty years wasn't bad.

I left, nibbling on the bread. Instead of heading for the Goose Chamber, I went up to my room on the second floor. I needed to talk to my servant, Dale. The fifth son of a minor noble, Dale was more intelligent than all his brothers together. I depended on him for information and insight. Sometimes, he told me things, gossip whispered among servants, that I'd never hear otherwise.

Dale was waiting for me with a cup of wine. Maybe not the best thing to have with the honey bread, but my throat was so dry, I wouldn't have turned down anything wet.

"What's the latest gossip among the servants?" I asked, then stuffed another chunk of bread in my mouth.

"What kind of gossip, Master?" he asked as he cocked his head. His hair and eyes were chestnut brown, and he was scarecrow lean.

"Anything recent—surprising, unusual," I mumbled around my breakfast. "Anything about anyone connected with the Goose."

"Ah." Dale nodded. "Rumor has it that one of the Royal Goose Guards recently married and bought property just outside the city."

I halted in mid-bite and stared at Dale. "A guard? When? Who?"

"One named Herman. He married about a month ago, a few days after buying Squire Plantus's land."

"But that estate is worth more than a guard makes in several years!"

Dale smiled and nodded.

I'd better check into Herman's sudden wealth. "Anything else?"

"Of course, Emperor Genyoofar has made no secret he wanted the Goose or one like it. He envies our wealth."

Yes, I thought. Genyoofar hap Igdon of the Seventh Dynasty of the Divinely Blessed Empire of Kolbindi—a grand title for the puny ruler of an even punier realm—had tried to wheedle information about the Goose for a long time. At that moment, Genyoofar was in Basilopolis for a meeting to discuss the threat posed to both our countries by the Wildmen. Last night's banquet had been in his honor.

"Anything else?" I asked.

Dale grinned. "Master Magnus is bedding Marnie Sieler. I heard she's having a wedding dress made, which she expects to use soon."

The Wizard and the Keeper of the Royal Goose. Another link between the Goose and Arcus.

"One more thing," Dale said. "One of the servants at the banquet told me that Morganstern Gleb laughed and drank a toast when he heard the Goose was dead. His hands have dozens of scars; the Goose nipped him every time he collected the eggs."

Morganstern Gleb, Keeper of the Royal Treasury. I hadn't considered him a suspect before. I'd heard him grumble because he'd had to collect eggs like some farm boy. Maybe he'd been bitten once too often, his pride damaged by his menial task. Add him to my list.

"All right," I said as I washed my sticky hands and dried them, "I want you to talk to the husbandman. Find out if Mistress Marnie talked to him during the night, and if so, how long she was with him. Also, bring the sergeant of the night watch and the Captain of the Guard when you return."

"Yes, Master," Dale bowed and left.

I looked at my reflection in the polished mirror and winced. A middle-aged man who'd been up most of the night wasn't a pleasing sight. Mirrors should be covered until midday at least.

The Goose Chamber was my next destination. I went downstairs, passed the kitchen, and turned the corner. No guards bracketed the door. No reason for them, now. I pushed the door open and went inside.

Mistress Marnie was there, sparring with another goose, the companion of the dead Goose. Geese need to be with their own kind or they die of loneliness—at least, that's what Marnie had told the king. So a second goose had been purchased at the same time the Goose had been declared royal property and moved from Marnie's farm to the castle.

The companion—a sleek, gray female—was nipping at Marnie, flapping wildly, and squawking and hissing while the Keeper tried to loop a rope around the bird's neck. Marnie swore at the goose and kicked at it, and the goose flew out to the garden.

"A most gentle technique," I said, trying not to grin.

Marnie jumped, cursed again, then turned as red as her hair when she saw me. "Your Honor, I was trying to remove that . . . beast from the castle, since it's not needed anymore."

"Noisy bird." I massaged the back of my neck. "Does it always act like this?"

"No," Marnie said as she threw the rope to the floor, "I've never seen it act like this before. It's usually good tempered, except when strangers are present."

"Why didn't anyone hear the companion when the Goose was stolen?"

Marnie started. "I . . . don't know." I wondered if her surprise was genuine.

I scanned the room. The pale gray walls and floor were all smooth stone. There were three doors: one to the corridor, one to the garden, and one to Marnie's own bedchamber. Two large boxes filled with straw sat in the center of the room. Nearby was a feed bin and a tub of water. Straw was scattered across the floor, probably from the deadly struggle.

I searched the floor, lifting large clumps of straw, moving smaller ones aside with my foot. There were no eggs in the nest, golden or otherwise, but I found some crushed and nearly dried leaves in one. I rubbed them between my fingers and sniffed. Herbs of some kind.

I walked out to the square, walled grassy garden. A dark purplish-red splotch stained the stone porch, probably where Herman had hit his head. The grass looked trampled, but that could've been from the geese. A small pond took up the southwestern corner, still shaded by the castle. The smooth stone walls were high and clear of vines. Any thief would've had to climb over the outer wall, cross the surrounding courtyard without being spotted by patrols, climb the inner wall to this garden, kill the goose, and get out the same way. No, I decided, not likely, especially for several men, if the guards were telling the truth—which I was certain they weren't.

To the right, there was a door in the garden wall. I tugged on the iron ring, then pushed on the door, which didn't budge. Looking over my shoulder at Marnie, I asked, "This leads to the kitchen garden, doesn't it?"

She nodded. "Sometimes I let the geese go in there. The king insisted they get to eat what they want from the garden."

"Was it usually unlocked?"

"No. Only when the geese were feeding. It was left open so they could come and go when they wanted."

"Who besides you has a key?"

Marnie slid her forefinger back and forth across her lower lip as she gazed at the door. "One for the kitchen and one for the Goose Guards."

Three keys. That cut down the possibilities. "You had yours with you all night?"

"Well . . . no." She stared at the grass. "I left it on a peg in my room except when I was using it."

"Get it."

She hurried back inside the Goose Chamber while I examined the door for evidence of force. There was none: no splintered wood, no pry marks, nothing. If anyone had come through this way, they hadn't broken in. Marnie returned moments later with an iron key. I took it from her, unlocked the door, and pushed it open.

The kitchen garden was the largest open area inside the castle walls, except for the courtyard. Several gardeners were hoeing and watering rows of beans, cabbages, greens, and herbs. At the far end, a pair of boys picked plums and peaches from the small orchard, and two women carried baskets of vegetables to the open kitchen door. I

shook my head and sighed. I wouldn't find signs of any intruders here. Even if there had been footprints, they were probably lost in the passing of all the servants.

I walked to the kitchen and found Wild Bill growling orders to the other cooks and scraping leftover stuffing into the compost barrel. "Where do you keep the key to the Goose garden?" I asked.

Bill nearly dropped the bowl he was holding. "Don't creep up on me like that! If I'd been holding a knife, you'd be dead now!"

"I'm sorry," I said, stepping back a bit. Bill looked as if he'd been drinking ever since I'd left him. He was formidable sober. I didn't want to know how dangerous he was when drunk. "Where do you keep the key to the Goose garden?"

He pointed to a peg beside the door.

"Anyone could take it from there," I said.

He kept scraping. "Only if I didn't see 'em do it."

"But anyone could, if you weren't here."

"I suppose."

"How many had the opportunity?"

He was silent a moment. "Let's see—six undercooks, four gardeners, two boys, seven serving women, four drudges, and me."

Twenty-four people. Wonderful. That narrowed the possibiiities. "How many of those were in the kitchen last night?"

"All of 'em," he said as the last scrap of stuffing fell into the barrel." Because of the banquet. We were working all yesterday."

"Did you see anyone come through who shouldn't have been here?"

He paused, then shook his head.

"Did anyone here go to the Goose garden regularly?"

Bill dropped the wooden spoon he held, then cursed as he had to fish it out of the barrel. "Oh, uh, yeah. I took greens and stuff to the geese sometimes, or I sent one of the boys in my place. Other than that, no one."

I sighed and went back through the gardens to the Goose Chamber. I wanted to see the Goose Guards and ask about their key. The companion goose was wandering about the garden, honking and flapping. Noisy creature. Just as I reached the door, I heard arguing.

"He'll be back any moment! Now leave!" Marnie hissed.

"But the Goose—I must have its body! I may be able breed a new one, and then we will be wealthy beyond even your dreams." I recognized the man's voice: Arcus Magnus.

"What good would another golden goose be if the king takes that one, too? I'm almost glad the thing's dead. It serves the king right, thief that he is! He stole it from me! It was mine; he had no right to take it!"

"Kings have the right to do as they wish, my dear," Arcus replied. "However, if I can retrieve the Goose's body, I may be able to create another, perhaps breed an entire race of golden-egg-laying geese. Every ruler in the world would pay to own one. And we would be richer than any of them."

I stepped into the room. Marnie and Arcus jumped guiltily and glanced at each other.

"So," I said as I watched them shift nervously. "Marnie, you resented that the Goose was taken from you by royal decree."

Marnie didn't say anything.

"The king shouldn't have taken the Goose, should he? It was your Goose, your property. You would've been rich, a queen yourself. He had no right to take what belonged to you."

"No, he didn't!" Marnie shouted, then clapped her hand over her mouth. "I mean, yes. Yes, he did. He's the king."

I didn't stop. "It wasn't fair, was it? The king stole the Goose from you. And then he made you its keeper, a servant to a goose! But you found a way to pay him back, didn't you? Kill the Goose, take away what he'd taken from you. You killed the Goose and threw it over the wall, didn't you? Didn't you?"

"No!" Marnie shouted. "I didn't! But I wish I had! It might have been worth seeing the king's face when I admitted it! But I didn't!"

"Where were you all night?" I held up a hand. "And don't tell me you were with the husbandman. I didn't believe you the first time."

"She was with me," Arcus broke in. I don't think I'd ever seen so much color in his face. He almost looked healthy.

"All night?"

"Yes!"

"Did anyone else see you?"

"I doubt that anyone espied her entering my chambers. We were most discreet."

I almost smiled. So discreet that every servant in the castle knew about the affair. "You were together all night?"

"Yes."

I turned to Marnie. "And when you returned, you found the Goose gone and the guards unconscious on the porch?"

She glared at me. "Yes."

She might be telling the truth, but I'd keep her—and Arcus —on my list. "You are both under arrest for dereliction of duty. Don't try to leave the castle."

I'm not certain what Marnie mumbled under her breath as I left the room, but I'm sure it wasn't complimentary.

I headed back to my room, hoping Dale had returned. I was climbing the stairs to my floor when I saw the shadow of someone tiptoeing up the spiral stair to the next floor, the guest floor. I followed; I couldn't help being curious.

As I reached the dimly lit top, I flattened against the cool stone and peeked around the corner. George the Goose Guard was just entering Emperor Genyoofar's room. I stepped out into the corridor, walked past the door guards, and entered the room next to the emperor's.

Being Minister of Justice and half-brother to the king, I knew all the secret passages in the castle. There was one in the room next to the guest quarters occupied by Genyoofar. I opened a wardrobe door, entered, and eavesdropped through a disguised opening.

"You fool! Now the Goose is dead, and I have nothing!" Genyoofar's voice was as puny as his stature, almost a whine. "I should expose your stupidity to King



Cannard!"

"That wouldn't be smart, Emperor," George said as soft as snow. "You'd have t' tell how you know. And you couldn't do that without exposing your part. Do you really want to tell the king you paid me to steal the Goose? I don't think you'd leave here alive."

Genyoofar didn't reply immediately. "Very well, but if you ever reveal any of this, I'll have Delmairin take care of you."

I shivered. Delmairin was Genyoofar's wizard-assassin and the only force keeping the emperor in power. Black Del he was called. Even Arcus was wary of him.

"And you remember, Emperor," George said, "I've hidden evidence of our deal in a safe place. If anything happens to me, everyone'll know what you've done."

"Then we will keep our secret."

"Yes, we will."

I heard footsteps, then Genyoofar's door opening and closing. So, George and Genyoofar had conspired to steal the Goose. Had Herman found out? Was that why the two guards had fought? Possible, but not likely. George would've killed Herman to silence him. Or maybe Herman had blackmailed George with the knowledge. Herman's sudden wealth had to come from somewhere.

I'd have to talk to George and Herman separately, and I'd have to tell the king that it was time for Genyoofar's visit to end. I didn't trust that imperial snake any farther than I could throw him.

I headed back to my room and found that Dale had returned. Beside him, the Captain of the Guard stood spear straight. Dale bowed. "As you requested, Master. The sergeant of the night watch has been sent for. He left the castle grounds for his home in the town."

The captain saluted. "You wished to question me?"

I nodded. "You have the key to the door between the kitchen garden and the Goose garden?"

"Yes, Your Honor."

"Do you keep it with you always?"

"Yes, Your Honor."

"Have you ever noticed it missing?"

"No, Your Honor. I even sleep with it around my neck. It never left my possession."

Third key accounted for. "Has anything unusual happened among the ranks lately?" I tried to sound careless, as if making idle conversation.

"Unusual?"

I poured a cup of wine and offered it to the captain, who refused it. Then I took a sip. "Rumors," I smiled, "gossip, anything strange."

He thought for a few moments. "No, not that might have anything to do with the Goose . . . except one of the Goose Guards is leaving. Married about a month ago and decided to try his luck at farming. I heard he won a lot of money gambling and bought Squire Plantus's estate."

Gambling. I should have such luck. "Thank you, Captain. Please see that no one leaves the castle without my permission. I need to speak to the sergeant as soon as possible. Also, I want to see Herman and George, but separately at first, then together. Can you arrange it?"

"Yes, Your Honor." He bowed and left.

I turned to Dale and took another sip. "Who do you think killed the Goose?"

"Who had the most to gain from its death?" he asked.

"Everyone," I said. "Everyone but you, me, and the king."

"Why not the king?"

I gazed at Dale, puzzled. "Why would the king want to kill the Goose? It brought him more wealth than he'd ever had."

"True, but I've heard he's unhappy with his new wealth." Dale leaned closer and whispered, "I've heard Treasurer Gleb has shown the king evidence that Basilopolis' treasury was being depleted almost as fast as the Goose laid eggs, what with all the extra guards needed to protect the kingdom from invasion. And goods from other realms are becoming so inexpensive, merchants and craftsmen of our country are being driven out of business. Gold is too common here, and its value is dropping."

I considered what he'd said. Economics had never been my strong point. I'd been relieved when I'd been appointed Minister of Justice instead of Keeper of the Treasury. "So you think the king could've been behind a plot to destroy the Goose?"

Dale shook his head. "I'm saying he had reason to want the Goose dead. But so did many others. Every ruler in the world wanted the Goose or wanted it dead."

More suspects. Just what I needed.

"Oh, the husbandman said Mistress Marnie did come to talk to him about straw, but it was just after sunset and only for a few minutes."

I smiled to myself. A knock at the door startled me.

Dale opened it, and George strode in.

He saluted. "You sent for me?"

"Yes," I stammered. "I'm surprised to see you so quickly."

"I met the captain downstairs. He said you wanted to see me, so I came straight here."

"Ah." I nodded at Dale, who bowed and retreated to the inner chamber. "Now . . . how long has Herman been blackmailing you?"

George jerked. "Blackmailing me? Why would he do that?"

"He found out you were working for the Emperor of Kolbindi."

The guard turned milk white. He started to say something, but no sound came.

"Herman found out, didn't he? And he threatened to turn you in if you didn't pay him. You've been giving him money to keep quiet. That's how he had the money to buy the land and marry. What happened? Did you stop paying? Is that why you fought?"

"No . . . I . . .no." George started to sweat. "It wasn't like that. He wasn't blackmailing me. He didn't know about the emperor."

"Then where did the money come from?"

He hesitated, then his shoulders sagged and he hung his head. "From the Goose."

"What?"

"We took eggs from the Goose," he mumbled. "Not often, only when it laid two and when Marnie wasn't there. We'd agreed not to spend the money until we retired in a few more months. But Herman wanted some girl from the town." George cursed under his breath. "She wouldn't marry him if he didn't have a house and land and enough money to keep her. So he used his part to buy Plantus's land, then married the girl. I told him he was a fool.

"Last night, he said he needed more money. I told him he'd have to wait 'til the Goose laid another egg. He said he couldn't wait that long. He needed the money now. I said he couldn't make the Goose lay another egg, and he said that I could give him some money. I told him no. He said if I didn't, he'd tell the captain I'd been stealing eggs an' I'd be hanged as a traitor."

"And that's when you fought."

George nodded slowly. "I told him he'd hang, too, but that didn't make any difference to him. He wanted the money, that was all that mattered. But we didn't kill the Goose. We fought in the garden. He knocked me out, and I don't know what happened after that. Marnie said she found Herman on the porch, his head bleeding. He said he fell and hit his head, and I guess it's true. I don't know who killed the Goose."

I looked at George silently. I didn't believe that he or Herman had killed the Goose either, but I didn't know who had. "About what time was it you fought?"

"Sometime after sunset. It was dark."

"You may go now." I paused as he saluted and turned to leave. "And I think you and Herman should resign from the guard today. I don't want you here in the morning, or the king will hear the whole story."

George faltered for a moment, then proceeded out the door.

Dale came back." So, if it wasn't Herman or George, who was it?"

I rubbed a cramp from my shoulder. "I still don't know. I have to talk to the sergeant first, then I'll talk to a few more people. I'd love a few hours of sleep."

The corner of Dale's mouth twitched. "Perhaps later, after you've solved life's great mystery."

I gulped the rest of my wine and immediately regretted it. Wine on a nearly empty stomach is a recipe for nausea.

I was feeling better by the time the sergeant of the night watch arrived. He looked as if he felt as good as I did.

He bowed awkwardly, as if stiff or sore. "You sent for me, Your Honor?"

"Yes. Did you notice anyone on the walls last night who wasn't supposed to be there, anyone not usually present?"

He thought for a moment. "No . . . no one I'd find suspicious." He frowned slightly, then continued. "No one I hadn't seen before."

"No reports of noise or shadows or anything?"

"No, it was quiet."

"Who walked the north wall last night?"

"Nob, Cully, and me."

"You heard nothing? Saw no one?"

"No one unusual."

"Well, did you see anyone usual?"

He looked uncomfortable. Maybe I was getting somewhere.

"Who was it?" I asked.

"Your Honor, I don't rat on other soldiers."

Ah. A soldier. "George?" No response. "Herman?" Still no response. I didn't want to list every soldier in the Guard. "Sergeant, if you don't tell me, you can explain yourself to the king. And he won't be as understanding as I am."

The soldier's hands clenched, and his eyes turned flint cold. "He can't help himself. Sometimes, he walks the walls like he was still a real guard. Sometimes, he's just sick and heaves his guts up over the wall. But he can't help it. Drink's got a hold on him and won't let go."

"Who?" I asked.

He looked at me, his eyes almost pleading. "Wild Bill."

Wild Bill? "He was on the wall last night?"

The sergeant nodded.

"When?"

"After midnight sometime."

After midnight. The feast was in progress then. Marnie was with Arcus. Herman and George were unconscious. Morganstern Gleb, Emperor Genyoofar, and the king were at the banquet. The banquet where there'd been no poultry, in spite of Genyoofar's known preference for goose. Where the stuffing had been made with apples and no sage and . . . I reached in my pocket, pulled out the herbs I'd found in the Goose's nest, and sniffed them again. Marjoram—the same aroma as the stuffing . . . poultry stuffing. Poultry stuffing with beef roast. I sank down into my seat, stunned. My voice a whisper, I said, "Thank you, Sergeant. You may go."

"He won't get in trouble, will he, Your Honor?"

"You may go," I repeated.

"Yes, Your Honor."

I left moments after the sergeant did. When I reached the kitchen, Bill was dragging the compost barrel outside.

"Bill," I said softly.

"I have to get this outside," he said, his words slurred as much by ale as by effort.

"Bill, I know."

The cook stopped struggling with the barrel and looked straight at me. His dark eyes were watery. "Know?"

"Yes, I know." I held out the herbs. "Poultry stuffing with beef."

He braced his thick arms on the rim, hung his head, and cried. I ordered everyone else from the kitchen, then put my arm around Bill's shoulders. "Why did you kill the Goose?"

"I didn't mean to," he sobbed. "I'd been busy with the banquet, checking sauces, baking pies, stewing fruit, roasting the venison and beef. I'd already made the stuffing before I realized I hadn't got a goose. It was too late to get one from town. Market was already closed. Then I remembered the companion goose. Figured I could replace it later.

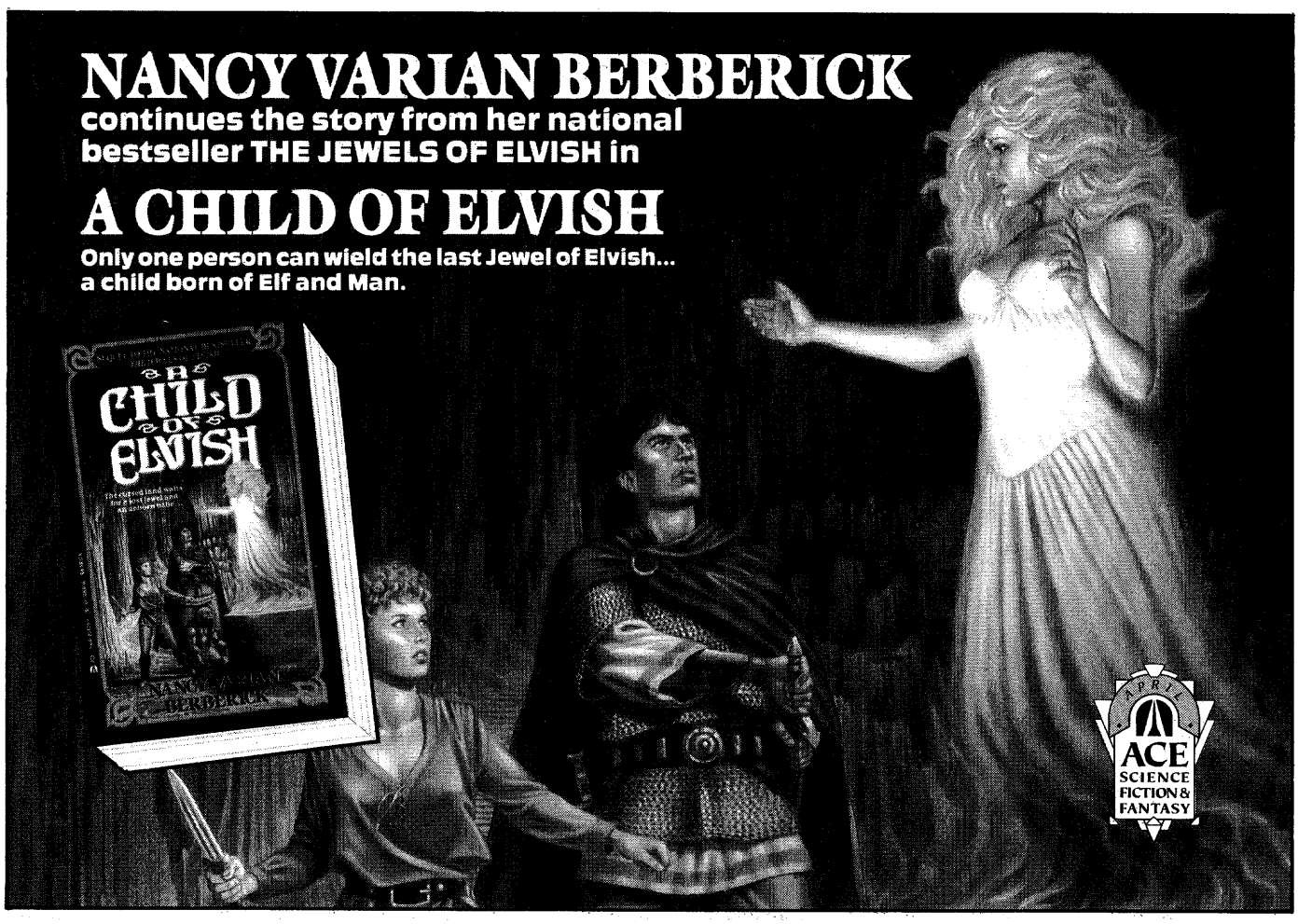
"I waited 'til no one was watchin', then I went through the garden gate. It was dark, and I didn't see Marnie or anyone else. I crept into the nest. The geese were sleeping. Thought I knew which nest was which 'cause I often brought greens to the geese . . . but I was drunk. Grabbed a goose and broke its neck quickly; didn't want it to suffer.

"Wasn't 'til I saw the goose in the light coming from the kitchen, I realized what I'd done. Couldn't take the dead Goose into the kitchen—everyone knew what it looked like. Had t' get rid of it, so I stuffed it in a bag and hid it in the garden. Later, I took the bag with me to the wall and dumped it over. Didn't know it'd be found so soon. Didn't mean to kill it, just the companion. I didn't mean it."

No grand conspiracies, no intrigues, just a drunken mistake. I stood there looking at him, not knowing what to do next. I'd proved the peasant boy Thom was innocent, but what about Bill? I could talk to the king and explain the situation. Wild Bill deserved better than disgrace. He'd saved the king's life numerous times and had been the hero of the war with the Wildmen.

Maybe I could get Bill a pardon, especially if I explained it was an accident and emphasized the benefits to the economy, such as cutbacks in spending for the army. And now that I thought about it, Squire Plantus's estate would be just the place for a veteran soldier and Royal Cook to retire. I smiled to myself. I don't think Herman would dare complain.

Yes, I'd talk to the king. After all, being the king's half brother does have its advantages. Ω



Virgin GAMES CENTRE

ICE
PO Box 1605
Charlottesville, VA 22902 USA
Write for a Free Catalog!
I.C.E.

Just when you thought it was safe to put away your wallet...

HERE COMES ANOTHER SUPPLEMENT FOR

Rolemaster™

It's Spell User's COMPANION™

Enough supplements to throttle the imagination! And if you don't have them *ALL*, you're not playing *Rolemaster!!

TITLE	Stock #
Rolemaster Character Records	1002
Creatures & Treasures	1400
Creatures & Treasures II	1410
Rolemaster Heroes & Rogues	1420
Rolemaster Companion I	1500
Rolemaster Companion II	1600
Rolemaster Companion III	1700
Rolemaster Companion IV	1800
Rolemaster Companion V	1900
Elemental Companion	1510
Spell User's Companion	**1520**

*OK, We're not serious; all these are optional rules. But they sure are fun!
†At press time, there was a chance that *Thermonuclear Magic Missile* might be deleted for national security reasons.



YOU'LL FIND:

- New Magical skills, new magical herbs, options galore, magic languages, more magic than even you thought possible!
- Billions (well, OK, dozens) of new spells: Genetic engineering, weapon mastery, matter shaping, animation, and intercontinental thermonuclear magic missile†.
- New suggestions for all realms, including that old favorite: Arcane magic!
- More ways to kick those brain-dead fighters' behinds!

Virgin **VIRGIN GAMES CENTRES ARE AT:**
100 Oxford Street, London • 18 Merchant Street, Bristol • Westgate Centre, Oxford • Clarence Street, Kingston.

AND VIRGIN MEGASTORES ARE IN:
London, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Leeds, Nottingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, Cardiff

TSR Previews....

NEW PRODUCTS FOR APRIL

Arabian Adventures
AD&D® game AL-QADIM™ rules set
by Jeff Grubb with Andria Hayday

The mysteries of fabled Arabia, the lands of sultans and djinn, come alive in this expansion to the AD&D® 2nd Edition rules. The 160-page softcover book introduces an exotic world inspired by tales of Sinbad, Ali Baba, and other classics from *The Arabian Nights*. The first in a new product line, it also gives all the special rules unique to this wondrous setting: new character classes like desert raiders and swashbuckling corsairs, new proficiencies like camel-riding, and a unique realm of magic. Get in on the ground floor of the latest AD&D® campaign, the AL-QADIM™ setting, and adventure with genies, ride flying carpets, and trek across the sands in search of the next oasis.
Suggested Retail Price: $18.00/£11.99
Product No.: 2126

PHBR7 *The Complete Bard's Handbook*
AD&D® 2nd Edition game accessory
by Blake Mobley

The bard is part wandering minstrel and part rogue; part performer and part con man. He is unlike any other character class; he's the jack-of-all-trades of the AD&D® game. This 128-page book explains the bard's tricks, talents, and secrets; it expands his magical ability; and it adds tremendous depth to one of the game's most intriguing classes.
Suggested Retail Price: $15.00/£9.99
Product No.: 2127

War Captain's Companion set
AD&D® game SPELLJAMMER™ boxed set
by Dale "Slade" Henson

Now you can face the deadly perils of ship-to-ship combat in the SPELLJAMMER™ campaign setting. This boxed set includes a tactical ship-to-ship combat game, with rules on ramming, boarding actions, and magic use. You'll also get new role-playing rules, skills, and magical items, plus rules for designing your own ships and a complete catalog of all spelljamming ships published to date. In addition, this set introduces a dozen new ship types for your SPELLJAMMER campaign. Brave barrages of missile fire and withstand magic spells as you prepare to board the enemy!
Suggested Retail Price: $20.00/£11.99
Product No.: 1072

NEW PRODUCTS FOR MAY

GAMMA WORLD® game, 4th Edition
Role-playing game rule book
by Bruce Nesmith

The classic TSR science-fantasy game is back, and it's better than ever! For the uninitiated, the GAMMA WORLD® game is set in a weird, far-future world, centuries after mankind tried its best to destroy itself. Now strange, sentient mutants—people, animals, and plants—as well as robots roam and rule this twisted landscape. New features contained in the 192-page book include character classes and levels, and a detailed campaign section.
Suggested Retail Price: $20.00/£12.50
Product No.: 7514

MHR1 *X-Forces: The Mutant Update*
MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game accessory
by Anthony Herring and Scott Davis

Useful on its own, or as a supplement to TSR's 1990 *Uncanny X-Men Special!* set, this sourcebox provides detailed histories of all the X-teams from recent story lines. Current members of all the teams are detailed, including the time-traveling X-Man, Bishop. This sourcebox contains two books, numerous character foldups, and an action-packed poster of Marvel's mutants, done by Marvel artist Tom Morgan.
Suggested Retail Price: $1500/£8.99
Product No.: 6905

RR4 *Islands of Terror*
AD&D® game RAVENLOFT™ accessory
by Colin McComb and Scott Bennie

Welcome to the realm of dread. The RAVENLOFT™ campaign setting is a place of dark terror, treachery, and intrigue. And now, it becomes darker still. These new island domains are destined to terrify even the bravest hero. Visit nine lands where time is measured in pounding heartbeats, where foul lords perpetuate their evil crimes amid the odor of decay.
Suggested Retail Price: $10.95/£6.99
Product No.: 9348

DSR2 *Dune Trader*
AD&D® game DARK SUN™ accessory
by Anthony Pryor

Some of the richest men on Athas are merchants who brave its unforgiving wastelands. In this 96-page accessory, PCs will encounter and deal with merchants of every class, from powerful merchant families to underhanded elven traders who deal in things both legal and illegal. Societies are built around trade, and Athas is no different. Find out how to make money the hard way—by tracking across desert wastes as a dune trader.
Suggested Retail Price: $10.95/£6.99
Product No.: 2407

DMGR4 *Monster Mythology*
AD&D® 2nd Edition game accessory
by Carl Sargent

Even the nonhuman races like elves, dwarves, drow, and the humanoids have legendary figures and deities. This 128-page accessory explores the murky worlds of witch doctors, shamans, monstrous avatars, and the clerical magic of these races. In addition, this book is the perfect supplement to the AD&D® 2nd Edition game's *Legends & Lore* book.
Suggested Retail Price: $15.00/£9.99
Product No.: 2128

MC14 *FIEND FOLIO® Appendix*
AD&D® 2nd Edition game accessory
by the RPGA™ Network

This appendix to the popular *Monstrous Compendium* series showcases many of the monsters from the now-rare original AD&D® game's FIEND FOLIO® book. This 64-page, loose-leaf supplement contains over 60 monsters, some culled from the original book, and some new, never-before-seen creatures.
Suggested Retail Price: $10.95/£6.99
Product No.: 2132

***Assault on Raven's* Ruin**
D&D® game module
by Tim Beach

Duty calls! The PCs must recover a magical scepter, stolen by goblins and hidden in the trap-laden keep of Raven's Ruin. The goblins are ready for visitors, however, and the PCs must fight the greatest battle of their young careers!
Suggested Retail Price: $6.95/£4.50
Product No.: 9350

The Maelstrom's Eye
SPELLJAMMER™ Cloakmaster Cycle, Volume Three
by Roger E. Moore

Teldin Moore learns more about his cloaks past and its potential powers from an elven admiral at the Rock of Bral—but he doesn't count on being caught up in the hurricane of the second Unhuman War. Vengeful humanoids rampage through the spheres on Moore's trail.
Suggested Retail Price: $4.95/£3.99
Product No.: 8032

The Oath and the Measure
DRAGONLANCE® Saga Meetings Sextet, Volume Four
by Michael Williams

This novel focuses on the early adventures of the enigmatic Solamnic knight, Sturm Brightblade, taking up after he becomes acquainted with the twins, Caramon and Raistlin, while they all are living in Solace. This is an action-packed story with a unique hero.
Suggested Retail Price: $4.95/£3.99
Product No.: 8343

Unless otherwise noted:
® designates registered trademarks owned by TSR, inc.
™ designates trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ and all Marvel characters and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof are trademarks of Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. and are used with permission.

Virgin GAMES CENTRE



DARK SUN (TM)
£9.99

AD&D® 2ND EDITION THE COMPLETE PSIONICS HANDBOOK
£7.50

VAMPIRES RPG
£9.99

CHICAGO BY NIGHT
£9.99

MIDDLE EARTH RPG (BOXED)
£9.99

MINAS I THIL
£7.99

RUNEQUEST DELUX
£14.99

GLORANTHA
£12.99

ALL THESE AND MORE ARE AVAILABLE FROM
THE VIRGIN GAMES CENTRES AT:
BRISTOL, BROMLEY, CROYDON, GUILDFORD, HULL, ILFORD, KINGSTON, LIVERPOOL, LONDON, OXFORD, SHEFFIELD, SOUTHAMPTON.

AND IN THE VIRGIN MEGASTORE AT:
Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Cardiff, Dublin*, Edinburgh, Argyle St Glasgow, Leeds, Marble Arch London, Newcastle, Nottingham.
***Prices May Vary In Dublin**

® & ™ designate trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved

LOOKING FOR PLAYERS?

Are you tired of spending half your precious gaming time looking for opponents? **HELP** has finally arrived! Whether you play wargames, role playing, miniatures, science fiction, or sports games, **GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE** will find opponents who live near you anywhere in the U.S. or Canada.

GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE will send you a list of the gamers in your area, as well as a list of **PBM** opponents if you like.

HERE'S WHAT YOU GET WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE:

- Become a **lifetime** member of a nationwide database of players. Gamers ordering lists after you will always get your name!
- Receive a list of opponents near you, as well as a list of PBM players.
- Locate players by player type, favorite games, and geographic location.
- Have your address updated anytime. When you have to move, walk into your new town with the names of local players already in your hands!
- Obtain a bonus list of players in your area when you "discover" that new game.

You might think you have all the players you need. But ask yourself these questions:

– Does your role playing group want to try a new DM?
– Are you tired of the same players and same strategies?
– Do you live in a medium or sparsely populated area?
– Do you play your favorite games less than 75% of the time?
– Would your group like to play against another group?
– Do you want stronger or more equal competition?

If you answered "YES" to any of these questions, then *GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE* can provide you with countless more hours of gaming enjoyment than you are getting now, all for as little as $5.95. **STOP HUNTING AND START PLAYING TODAY!**

Send application below along with appropriate check amount to:

GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE
P.O. Box 175 • Fayetteville, Georgia 30214
(404) 460-6515



The GLS logo is a trademark owned by GAMER'S LOCATION SERVICE

APPLICATION

NAME _____ Address _____ Tel. _____

City_____ State_____ ZIP _____ Are you a: Dungeon Master? ❑

Club President? ❑

Please check membership preference (Canadians add 25%):

$ 5.95 ❑ Lifetime membership to database – players ordering lists will always get your name

$ 9.95 ❑ Lifetime membership plus one list of players

$14.95 ❑ Lifetime membership plus 3 annual lists, a PBM list, and bonus list.

Do you primarily play (check one)

wargames ❑ role playing ❑ miniatures ❑ Science Fiction ❑ sports games ❑

Three favorite games

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

Three favorite PBM games

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(Miniature players list time periods)

TD3

Wear Your Best Suit!

by Justin Mohareb

Color by Steve Sullivan

Advanced armored battlesuit rules for the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game



Scenario one (from the *Iron Man* comic book): Tony Stark, as Iron Man, fights Firepower and receives several damaging blows. Tony is beaten senseless and has his armor nearly destroyed, so he has to fly warily to his nearby helicopter.

Scenario two (from the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game): Tony Stark, as Iron Man, fights Firepower and receives several damaging blows. Tony is beaten senseless and flies his undamaged armor at top speed to his nearby helicopter.

Notice the difference? In the MARVEL SUPER HEROES game, armored battlesuit combat should be handled differently to reflect damage incurred to the armor during combat, and to better represent the unusual abilities of an armored hero. The system in this article showcases an alternate method of generating and playing high-tech armored characters.

Creating armored heroes

This article assumes that you have MA3 *The Ultimate Powers Book*. If you don't, simply use the *Players' Book* from the Advanced Set rules, selecting the powers you think are reproducible by machinery or electronics. Using this system, armored heroes are rolled up using column 2 ("Normal Folks") of the character-generation table, not column 3 ("High Technology") as in both the *Ultimate Powers Book* or the Advanced Set rules). These abilities are the character's normal levels. This is to reflect that the character is a normal human wearing an armored suit that supplies him with his super powers.

Judges may wish to allow a character to increase his physical stats when wearing

the armor by rolling once on Table 1 here, then dividing the results among the hero's four physical abilities (FASE). Note that the ability scores indicated when the character adds the modifiers to his personal attributes reflect the benefits of the armor only when it is being worn. For example, a character whose Strength is Typical (6), with a + 3CS modifier for the armor, might add +1CS, +2CS, or +3CS to his Strength, or he might not increase his Strength at all, preferring to divide + 3CS among his other three physical statistics.

If the character created his own armor, he also receives a + 1CS to his Reason, a + 1CS to his Electronics talent, and another + 1CS to repair and modify his personal armor. If the character receives the armor from someone else, it is assumed that the original owner or people he knows (all NPCs) can repair it. In the latter case, the hero would not receive any of the Reason bonuses above, though he could receive training later on, at the Judge's discretion.

The character then rolls up the number of his armored suit's powers, using the usual tables in the *Ultimate Powers Book* or the Advanced Set rules. This character automatically has Body Armor at Excellent (20) rank, though this can be increased (see the note under "Defensive powers," which follows). When the character's powers are determined, a special power rank called Armor Endurance is also created. This is usually called ECM (electronic countermeasures) and is used against attempts to control the armor from outside sources.

Because of their nature, armored heroes can use only certain powers that could be technology based. A suggested list of these powers, from the *Ultimate Powers Book*, is given here:

Defensive powers: Body Armor (already taken but can be taken again; + 1CS each time this is chosen as a power), Force Field, Reflection, Resistance to Energy Attacks, Resistance to Physical Attacks.

Detection powers: Circular Vision, Energy Detection, Hypersensitive Hearing, Hypersensitive Touch, Life Detection Microscopic Vision, Penetration Vision, Radarsense, Sonar, Telescopic Vision, Thermal Vision, Ultraviolet Vision.

Energy Control powers: Electrical Control, Energy Sponge, Hard Radiation Control, Magnetic Manipulation.

Energy Emission powers: All except for Energy Doppelganger.

Fighting powers: Weapons Creation.

Illusory powers: Illusion-Casting, Illusory Duplication.

Life Control powers: Sleep—Induced.

Magical powers: None.



Matter Control powers: Bonding, Machine Animation.

Matter Conversion powers: Disintegration.

Matter Creation powers: Missile Creation, Spray, Webcasting.

Mental Enhancement powers: Clairaudience, Clairvoyance, Communicate With Cybernetics, Danger Sense, Speech-throwing, Total Memory. (These powers are not mental powers per se, but are technological versions of mental powers.)

Physical Enhancement powers: Hyper-Speed, Lung Adaptability, Stealth, Waterbreathing, Water Freedom.

Power Control powers: None.

Self Alteration powers: Blending, Invisibility.

Travel powers: Gliding, Hyper-Digging, Hyper-Leaping, Hyper-Running, Hyper-Swimming, and Rocket.

Players can choose their armor's powers from this list. If you find this list to be too limiting, just use your imagination, The cornerstone of super-hero gaming is the use of powers in new ways,

Once the powers for the battlesuit have been selected, rolls are made on Table 2 for the power rank of each power. These rolls are not modified, with the exception of Body Armor (as previously noted). Also generate a power rank for Armor Endurance at this point.

Damaging armor

To add depth to armored combat, each power—including Body Armor—and each of the FASE ability modifiers is then assigned a number as part of a random-roll table. These numbers will determine which of the armor's systems are damaged when an attack exceeds the suit's Body Armor (or applicable Force Fields, etc.) by more than + 1CS, as noted later. The numbers should be arranged so as they can be rolled on a simple die: 1d8, 1d10, 1d12, etc. Optionally, assign two or more numbers on such a table to a power that would have a greater chance of being damaged, like Body Armor or Flight, depending on your vision of the character's armored suit and the placement of his weaponry and equipment.

We now get to the *raison d'etre* for this expanded system: armored suit combat. Every time the character is in combat and receives a blow that inflicts more damage than his Body Armor rank, the character takes damage equal to the amount of damage minus the amount absorbed by his body armor. For example, if a hero has Remarkable (30) Body Armor and is hit by an Incredible (40) rank Force bolt, the hero takes 10 points of damage (40 - 30 = 10). This is per the normal rules.

If the damage is 2CS or more than the Body Armor rank, the character takes the appropriate damage, and percentile dice are then rolled on the rank of the attack - 4CS to determine if the character's armor was damaged by the attack. For ex-

ample, if the hero as above with Remarkable (30) Body Armor was punched by a villain possessing Amazing (50) Strength, the hero would take 20 points of damage and would roll 1d100 on the Good (10) column (50 -4CS = 10). If the result is red, then roll on Table 3.

Energy attacks are a special case, as Body Armor is 20 points less effective against energy attacks than against physical ones. When a hero is hit by an Energy attack capable of breaching the armor's reduced rank vs. Energy attacks, the character must follow the procedure for determining armor damage from physical attacks as before. Armored heroes can take Resistance to Energy Attacks to cover this weakness.

Repairing damage

Fixing damaged armor is relatively simple. The hero must make a Reason FEAT roll to make the proper repairs correctly. A Resources FEAT roll might be called for as well, to see if the hero can afford to make the repairs. Other strictures can be applied to the roll at the Judge's whim.

It is often a good idea for the Judge to make the Reason FEAT roll for the hero in secret. That way, if the roll is a failure by a narrow margin—say, within five points of the number needed for success—the hero may mistakenly believe that his armor is repaired when it actually might fail at an important moment. This is a nasty thing to do, but I leave the decision whether or not to use this up to each Judge.

Armored advancement

The player may, at some point in his hero's career, attempt to modify the hero's armor by adding new powers. Armor powers can be added, up to the maximum number that was determined at creation, by spending 3,000 Karma for each, plus 10 times the starting rank number for that power (this is also the formula by which robots can add powers). Power advancement is done normally, by spending 10 points times the current rank plus 500 points for cresting from one rank to another.

A Reason FEAT roll should be called for, with the difficulty equal to the new rank, if an old power is being advanced to a new, higher rank or if a new power is set at its starting level. A Resource FEAT roll might also be needed to see if the hero has the cash to perform the modifications.

The Judge should make his own rulings on how to do the "total makeover" that's so popular with armored heroes, including such things as resetting Popularity to zero, upping appropriate powers and FASE abilities one rank, or adding new things. This should cost a great deal: about 10,000 Karma points, a high Resource FEAT roll (Amazing or better), and access to high-tech equipment or a high (Incredible or better) Reason FEAT roll. (This is, of course, up to the individual Judge.) All other forms of advancement are performed normally.

Creativity is the key to any successful and enjoyable role-playing game. This system can only get you started on the way. Where you go now is up to you.

Marvel's characters and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof are trademarks of Marvel Entertainment Group. Inc. and are used with permission. Copyright ©1992 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Table 1
Armor Modifiers for FASE Abilities

1d100	Result
01-10	Unchanged
11-20	+1CS
21-45	+2CS
46-75	+3CS
76-95	+4CS
96-00	+5CS

Table 2
Power Rank Generation Table

1d100	Power rank
01-05	Feeble (2)
06-10	Poor (4)
11-20	Typical (6)
21-40	Good (10)
41-55	Excellent (20)
56-80	Remarkable (30)
81-95	Incredible (40)
96-00	Amazing (50)

Table 3
Armor Damage Table

1d100	Damage result
01-20	One power is at - 2CS
21-40	One FASE ability modifier is at - 2CS
41-65	One power is inoperative
66-90	All powers are at - 1CS
91-94	All FASE ability modifiers are - 1CS
95-98	All FASE ability modifiers and powers are at -2CS
99-00	Massive systems overload. All FASE ability modifiers are at - 2CS, and all powers, with the exception of one (of the player's choice) are inoperative



The Wanderers



"--NOT MORE WANDERING MONSTERS?!"



A new way to roll for random encounters

by Jerold M. Stratton

Artwork by Mark Doney

The standard ways of making a wandering monster encounters table—the 2d10 and the 1d100 methods—often require a lot of figure juggling to make sure that no encounter appears too often or not often enough. They don't provide much variety in encounter, either, and it can be very hard to simply look at such tables and know what creatures inhabit the area.

I developed a new method of creating wandering monster tables to alleviate these problems. First, I divided up encounters into the following types:

—Civilized peoples
—Humanoid creatures
—Harmless encounters
—Animals
—Fantastic creatures

These divisions depend heavily upon the mindset of the major local cultures. The distinction between civilized peoples (humans, elves, dwarves, etc) and humanoid creatures (orcs, goblins, trolls, etc) is a good example of this. If you are creating tables for a culture that does not make that distinction, your table should not make the distinction either.

Let's fill out a sample encounters table. Table 1 is for a rural area in my campaign, between the Low Road and the Long Lakes. I can see at a glance who lives here. The adventurers are twice as likely to meet a humanoid than members of a civilized race, and most of their encounters will be with normal animals.

Let's go further and fill out Table 2 for civilized peoples. This table stores a lot of information. When I look at it a month after creating it, I will remember these salient facts:

1. Adventurers are very rare.
2. Only humans have settlements in this area.
3. Halflings, elves, and dwarves do not reside here. They travel through often, though, in groups of 1-20. Halflings and elves are more common than dwarves.

The human subtable, Table 3, comes next. From this table, I see that most of the inhabitants of the area live in groups—a couple of farms or a village. Thieves are present but not common. There are shapechangers in the area; "masquerader" is local lingo for supernatural creatures disguised as humans.

What masqueraders live in the area? We check Table 4. Most of these encounters are with lone creatures. Even vampires and dopplegangers usually travel alone.

The advantages of this type of table are obvious, as each table holds information. If I want to know about humans in an area, I look at the human table. If I want to know which giants are in the area, I look at the giants table. I don't need to search through one list and hope that I spot all of them, nor do I need to keep a separate reference explaining which creatures are in the area. The table suffices.

I can also create one of these tables quickly. While I might not know how often I want pegasi showing up, I do have a good idea how often I want "fantastic" creatures showing up, so I can create the main table very easily and work down. In the end, there is greater variety with these tables than with simpler tables.

I've reproduced the rest of this set of tables as a guideline. Remember that I designed these tables specifically for my own campaign; you will want to design your own tables for your campaign areas. Ω

Table 1
Rural Area Encounters

1d100	Encounter
01-10	Civilized peoples (see Table 2)
11-30	Humanoids (see Table 5)
31-46	Harmless encounters (see Table 7)
47-91	Animals (see Table 8)
92-00	Fantastic creatures (see Table 10)

Table 2
Civilized Peoples

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-65	Humans (see Table 3)
66-78	Halflings (1d20)
79-90	Elves (1d20)
91-97	Dwarves (1d20)
98-00	Adventurers (2d6 - 1)

Table 3
Humans

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-30	1d8 farms (2d4 people each)
31-55	Small village (1d6 x 10 people)
56-62	Large village (1d100 + 30 people)
63-64	Inn/tavern (1d8 workers)
65-71	Brigands (1d20 brigands)
72	Caravan (5d10 merchants and guards)
73-76	Merchants (1d10 merchants and guards)
77-98	Travelers (1d10 people)
99-00	Masqueraders (see Table 4)

Table 4
Masqueraders

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-50	Werewolf (1)
51-68	Werebear (1)
69-88	Wererat (1)
89-95	Wereleopard (1)
96-97	Vampires (1d4 -2*)
98-99	Dopplegangers (1d8 - 4*)
00	Gold dragon (1)

* Minimum of 1.

Table 5
Humanoids

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-35	Goblins (2d20)
36-67	Hobgoblins (1d20)
68-73	Trolls (1d6 -2*)
74-78	Orcs (1d20)
79-89	Giants (see Table 6)
90-00	Cyclopskin (1d6)

* Minimum of 1.

Table 6
Giants

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-70	Hill giants (1d10)
71-99	Stone giants (1d4)
00	Storm giant (1)

Table 7
Harmless Encounters

1d100	Encounter
01-30	Small stream in path (1d6 +4 feet wide)
31-48	Swarm of insects/flock of birds
49-59	Strange noise
60-65	No noise
66-90	Lake/pond ((5d10) x 100 feet across)
91-94	Unmarked tomb
95	Part of animal skeleton
96	Human skeleton
97-00	Remains of small settlement

Table 8
Animals

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-05	Badgers (1d8 -4*)
06-07	Bull (1)
08-10	Cattle (1d20)
11-15	Dogs (1d8 -2*)
16-26	Herd animals (1d20)
27-29	Horses (1d6)
30-36	Stags (1d4)
37-45	Wolves (2d6)
46-47	Wolverines (1d10)
48-50	Bats* * (1d100)
51-52	Eagles (1d10)
53-54	Goats (2d10)
55-60	Owls (1d2)
61-63	Ravens (1d6)
64-68	Rats (2d10 - 1*)
69-70	Rams (1d4 - 1*)
71-75	Skunks (1d4 - 2*)
76-80	Snakes (see Table 9)
81-88	Squirrels (1d20)
89	Vultures (1d4)
90-91	Weasels (1d2)
92-93	Leopards (1)
94-95	Wildcats (1d3)
96-99	Black widows (1d8)
00	Dire wolves* * * (2d4)

* Minimum of 1.
* * At night only; normal flock of birds in daytime.
* * * At night or in wintertime only; normal pack of dogs otherwise.

Table 9
Snakes

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-20	Blue racers * (1d4 - 2 * *)
21-29	Copperheads* (1d8 - 4 * *)
30-80	Garter snakes* (1d4)
81-94	Water snakes* (1d20 - 10 * *)
95-99	Rattlers* (1d10 - 6**)
00	Huge snake* (1), from south

* Special creature of author's creation.
* * Minimum of 1.

Table 10
Fantastic Creatures

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-07	Griffon (1)
08-16	Hippogriffs (1d2)
17-23	Wyverns (1d6)
24-25	Chimera (1)
26-27	Unicorns (1d6 - 4)
28-31	Hellhounds (1d4)
32-34	Pegasi (1d2)
35-42	Perytons (1d6)
43	Beholder (1), from south
44-47	Carrion crawler (1d20 - 10), from Deep Forest
48-54	Giant spiders (1d10)
55-60	Giant bats (1d20)
61-84	Undead (see Table 11)
85-99	Faerie folk (see Table 13)
00	Dragon (see Table 14)

Table 11
Undead

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-02	Groaning spirit (1)
03-05	Vampires (1d8 - 6*)
06-15	Ghouls (1d20)
16-17	Zombie, on mission (1)
18-20	Spectre (1)
21-24	Wraith (1)
25-39	Werecreature (see Table 12)
40-44	Wight (1d6)
45-49	Ghost (1)
50-69	Poltergeist (1)
70-00	Phantom (1d100 - 80*)

* Minimum of 1.

Table 12
Werecreatures

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-50	Werewolf (1d6 -4*)
51-70	Wererat (1d10- 4 *)
71-90	Werebear (1d2)
91-00	Wereleopard (1d8 - 6 *)

* Minimum of 1.

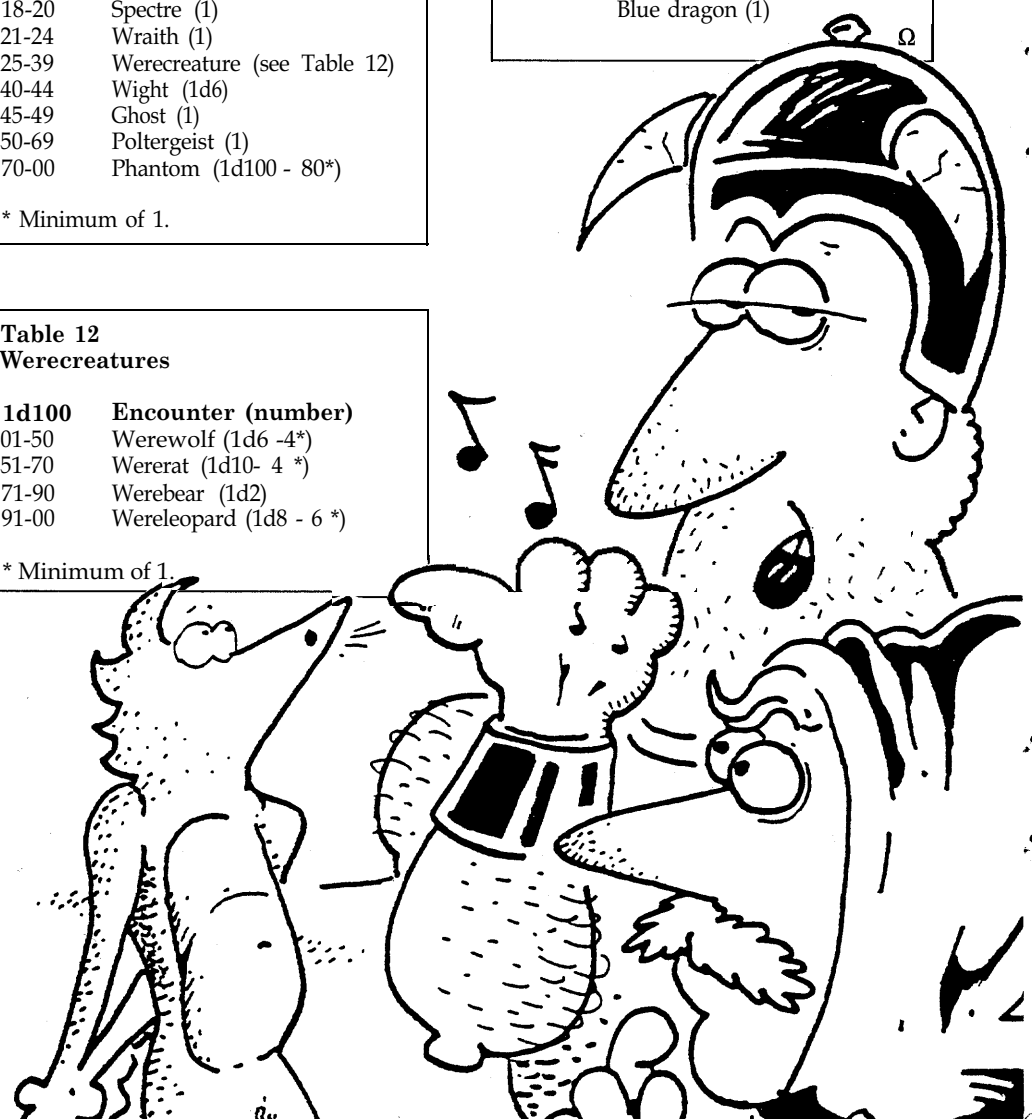
Table 13
Faerie Folk

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-13	Fossergrim* (3d4)
14-20	Sylphs (1d2)
21-31	Brownies (1d20)
32-36	Dryads—Tree* (1d6)
37-38	Dryads—Rock* (1d4)
39-44	Nymphs (1d10); satyrs nearby 60% of the time
45-58	Pixies (1d100)
59-67	Satyr (1d8); nymphs nearby 10% of the time
68-79	Leprechauns (1d6 - 2 **)
80-89	Sprites (1d10 - 6**)
90-00	Nereids (1d10)

* Special creature of author's creation.
* * Minimum of 1.

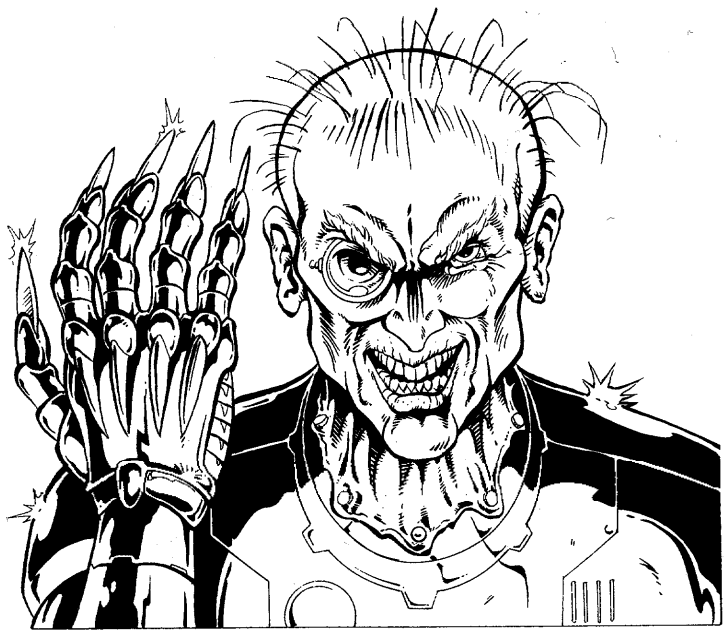
Table 14
Dragons

1d100	Encounter (number)
01-48	Green dragon (1)
49-70	Red dragon (1)
71-90	White dragon (1)
91-98	Gold dragon (1)
99	Black dragon (1)
	Blue dragon (1)



Palladium Books® Presents

Two giant new sourcebooks



Villains Unlimited™

For Heroes Unlimited™, Ninjas & Superspies™, & TMNT®

The first supplement specifically for **Heroes Unlimited** is gigantic. Over 200 pages filled with dangerous super villains, mutants, robots, aliens, and more.

New super powers, a handful of super-heroes, secret organizations, global assassins, adventures and adventure ideas fill this adventure source book. But that's not all. The book is written and illustrated by Kevin Long and Kevin Siembieda, with a helping hand from Michael Gustovich and a few others. The cover features a painting by artist James Steranko.

Highlights Include:

- **New super-powers.**
- **Over 50 Super-Villains (mutants, aliens & others).**
- **Super Villain teams and secret organizations (and how to create them).**
- **Adventures and adventure ideas.**
- **Written by Siembieda and Long.**
- **Illustrated by Long, Gustovich, and Siembieda.**
- **Cover by Steranko.**
- **Sourcebook for Heroes Unlimited™, Ninjas & Superspies™, and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles®.**
- **Compatible with Rifts®, Beyond the Supernatural™ and the entire Palladium Megaverse®.**
- **200+ pages — $19.95; please add $2.00 for postage and handling.**

Rifts® World Book Two:

Atlantis™

The mysterious continent of Atlantis has risen from its watery grave only to become the domain of the Splugorth; conquerors of worlds and masters of trans-dimensional travel.

Atlantis itself is a dimensional gateway to other worlds. The Bermuda triangle is its neighbor and ley line cover the land seething with energy. It is a land of magic and techno-wizardry and, in many ways, a cross section of a dozen dimensions transplanted to our Earth.

Thus, Atlantis has become a haven for dozens of alien and supernatural beings. All manner of intelligent and monstrous life forms are bought and sold at the Atlantean slave markets, as well as alien technology, magic, and decadent pleasures. All found at the many dimensional bazaars. Where secrets and treachery abound.

Then there are the enigmatic, original Atlanteans: dimensional mages and vampire hunters — but are they friends or foe.

Highlights:

- **The Splugorth revealed; complete stats.**
- **Aliens, borgs, and monsters.**
- **Atlantis and key cities mapped and described.**
- **Aspects for traversing the Megaverse.**
- **New forms of magic, weapons, and equipment.**
- **Written by Kevin Siembieda.**
- **Illustrated by Kevin Long and Newton Ewell.**
- **Keith Parkinson Cover.**
- **164+ pages: $14.95**
- **Available late April 1992.**

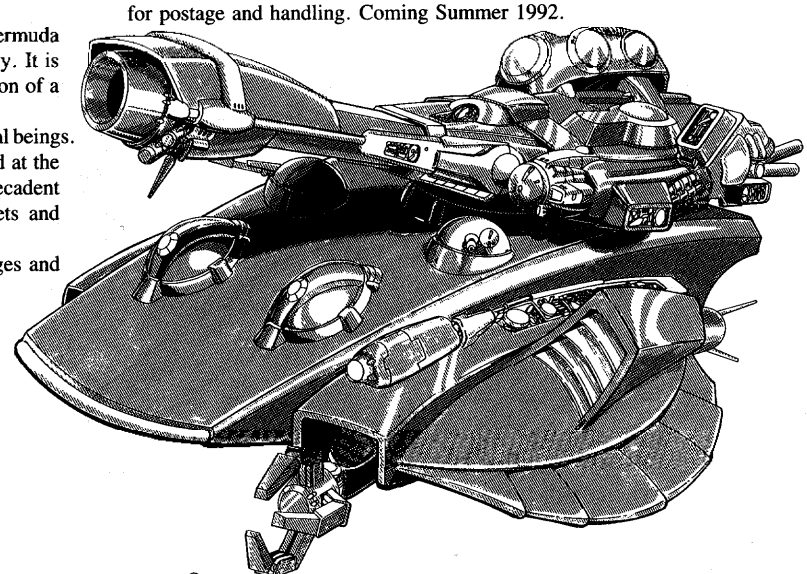
Available Now!

Mutants in Orbit™. Rifts® Space: The startling answers to the questions of what lays within Earth's orbit, on the moon and Mars. And those answers include A.R.C.H.I.E. Seven, the Cyberworks Corporation, new Glitter Boys, new bots and power armor, killer satellites, mutants, giant insects, monsters and more! A sourcebook for *Rifts®* and *After the Bomb®*. Parkinson cover, interior art by Gustovich and Ewell. *120 pages — $11.95* plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

Palladium Books® Complete 1992 Catalog is featuring descriptions of the entire *Palladium product line* including **Rifts®, Robotech™, RECON®**, videocassettes, T-shirts, and coming attraction for our many new 1992 products. Only 50 cents — 32 pages.

More Rifts® Coming Soon

Sourcebook Two: The Mechanoids®. ARCHIE-3 has made new friends and together they want to conquer the megaverse. Action packed adventure, new Mechanoid® designs and stats, new ARCHIE bots, and more. Cover by Kevin Long. Art by Long and Newton Ewell. **120 pages — $11.95** plus $1.50 for postage and handling. Coming Summer 1992.



Rifts® Calendar featuring the cosmic art of Kevin Long and Keith Parkinson, including past covers, interior paintings, and a few brand new painting special for this calendar. **$11.95** plus $1.50 for postage and handling. Coming August 1992.

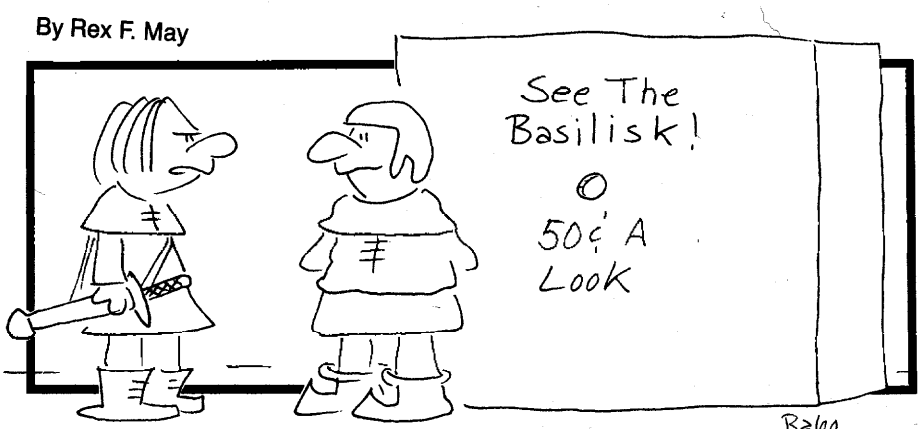
Palladium Books®
Dept. D

5926 Lonyo Avenue
Detroit, MI 48210

Available in comic book shops and hobby stores everywhere!

Copyright © 1992 Kevin Siembieda
Palladium Books®, Rifts®, Megaverse® and After the Bomb® are registered trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda. Other titles are trademarks.

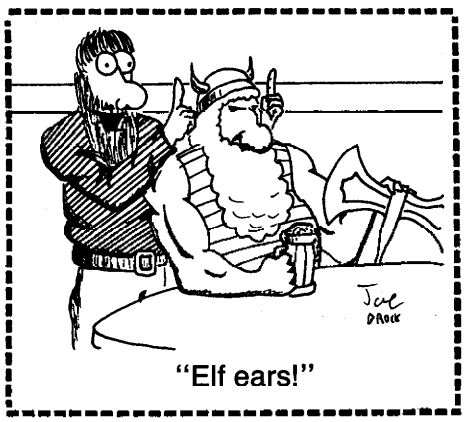
By Rex F. May



"Do you think I was born yesterday?"

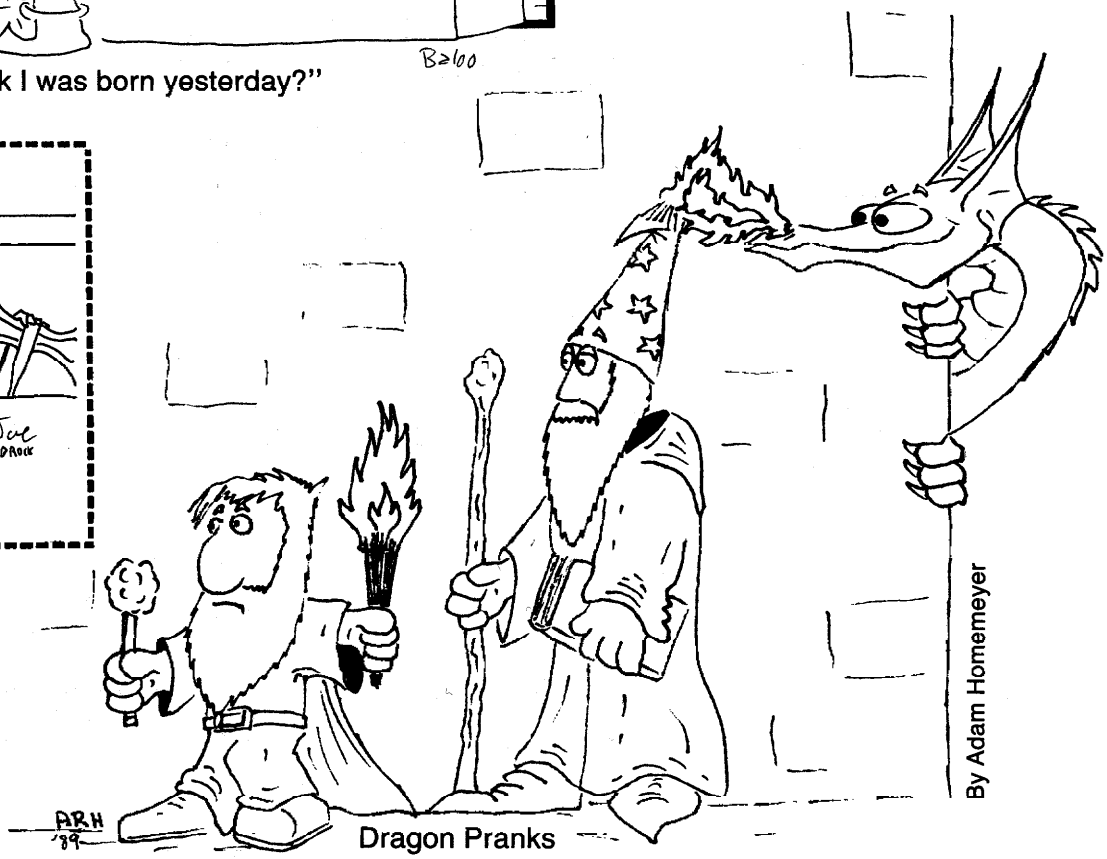


This space contributed as a public service.



"Elf ears!"

By Jae Brock



By Adam Homemeyer

Dragon Pranks



By Barbara Manui & Chris Adams

By Bob Muleady



"All right, who's been playing with the copying machine?"



By Larry F. Schoettmer

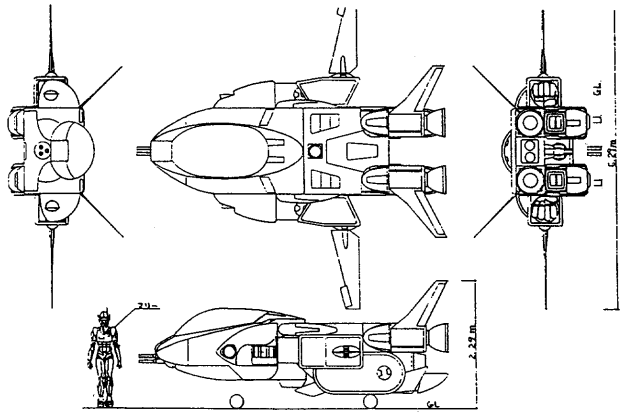
THE TWILIGHT EMPIRE

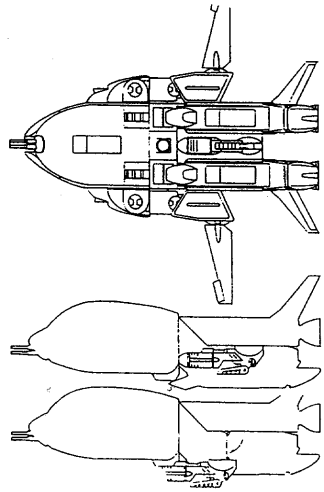


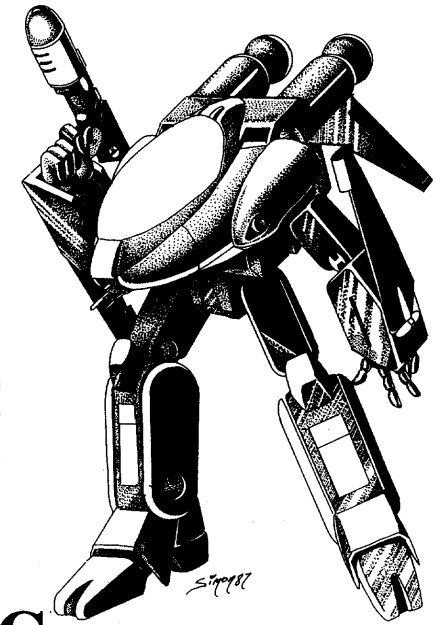

WELL, I DON'T GET IT. WHY ARE WE FOLLOWING THESE TOADS?
THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT ESTAL, THE CRYSTAL WE NEED TO CONTROL THE DRAGON.
YEAH, LOOK, ABOUT THIS DRAGON STUFF... YOU SURE THIS IS THE BEST WAY TO GO?
IT'S MY ONLY WAY HOME.
RIGHT.
MAGIC, THEN?
SAY, ROB, WHY IS IT YOUR BACKPACK WASN'T CRISPED BY THE FIRE SLIME?
HA HA, NO— GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS.
FLAME RETARDANT. CUTS DOWN ON CAMPING ACCIDENTS.
MEGY! ESTAL VAK.
SO THIS IDOL OF ESTAL IS THAT WAY?
OKAY, WE'RE GOING.
THANKS A LOT.
WRITING & COLORING
Stephen D. Sullivan
ART
John M. Hebert
LETTERING
Paul Hook
™ and © 1992 S. Sullivan
Art ™ 1992 J. Hebert
All Rights Reserved
ROBINSON'S WAR
PART 25


I DON'T SEE ANYTHING.
CERTAINLY NOT A STATUE WITH A CRYSTAL EYE.
BRENNA, CAN YOU SEND THE LIGHT UP AHEAD SO WE CAN GET A BETTER LOOK?
SURE.
WHOO HOO
GALEN, WHAT...!
WHOOO
LUVIAR'S GARTERS!
OH BOY.
ESTAL!
ESTAL JON!
CRO-HAH! CRO-HAH! CRO-HAH!
NEXT:
THE EYES HAVE IT

Palladium Books® Presents







ROBOTECH™
Videocassettes & Role-Playing Games

Robotech™: The New Generation Videocassette Series

Robotech™ the New Generation is the story of the *Invid's Invasion* of Earth and the valiant struggle of the famous freedom fighters, Scott Bernard, Lancer, Rook, Rand, Lunk and Annie. Mecha include the REF Alpha, Beta, Cyclone, and others. There are eight cassettes in the series. Volumes 1-7 each contain three (3) original episodes, uncut and unedited. Suggested retail price: $29.95 per each three episode volume.

Robotech™: The New Generation volume eight contains the final four (4) episodes and the conclusion of the original **Robotech™** TV series. The final episodes end with the arrival of the REF fleet and the spectacular battle at *Reflex Point*. Rare!

Suggested retail price is $39.95 for volume eight only. Available at comic shops and hobby stores everywhere or directly from Palladium for $34.95 plus $5.00 for postage and handling (total: $39.95). Volumes 1-7 are available from Palladium for $24.95 plus $5.00 for postage and handling (total: $29.95). — Mailed first class in protective bubble envelope.

Robotech™: Southern Cross Videocassette Series

The 24 episodes of **Robotech™**: Southern Cross are being released on eight videocassettes, three episodes per cassette. Volumes One, Two and Three are available NOW! The remaining videocassettes will be released monthly until the series is complete.

Just like the **Robotech™: New Generation series**, each videocassette will contain three (3) complete, unedited, episodes. Each box will contain new artwork and each tape will be of high quality.

Southern Cross takes place 20 years after **Macross** and opens with the invasion of the **Robotech™ Masters!** The RDF and REF have gone off on a long space journey. Earth's defenses are left in the hands of the valiant but inexperienced Armies of the Southern Cross. The army rises to meet the challenge of this new alien attacker and engages the insidious Robotech™ Masters in a life and death struggle.

The most notable characters include **Dana Sterling** (Max & Miriya Sterling's daughter), **Bowie Grant, Louie Nichols, Nova Satori, General Rolf Emerson,** and the enigmatic **Zor Prime** (a clone of the original Zor!). **Mecha** includes the **Veritech Hover Tank, Veritech Copter, Veritech Logan,** and **Bioroids**, as well as other war vehicles, jets, spaceships and battloids! Lots of great fight sequences in space and on the ground!

Each volume contains three episodes and sells for a suggested retail price of $29.95 or can be purchased through the mail directly from Palladium for $24.95 plus $5.00 for postage and handling (total: $29.95). Mailed first class in protective bubble envelope.

Volume One, Volume Two, and **Volume Three.** Available now!

Volume Four: Episodes **46: Star Dust, 47: Outsiders, 48: Dejavu.** Dana continues to exhibit a bit of empathy and psychic hunches and can not shake certain feelings about the captive bioroid pilot (Zor). **Available late February, 1992.**

Volume Five: Presents episodes **49: A new Recruit. 50: Triumvirate,** and **51: Clone Chamber.** It is decided to induct Zor into the army of the Southern Cross. A full scale assault is launched against the Masters. Zor, Dana and Bowie get closer to the secret of the Robotech™ Masters and protoculture. Plus epic space battles! **Available late March, 1992.**

Volume Six: Contains episodes **52: Love Song, 53: The Hunters** and, **54: Mind Game.** Louie Nichols creates the *Pupil Pistol*, Dana is involved in more intrigue, while the savage space battle continues, with exciting fight sequences featuring the Veritech Copter. **Available late April, 1992.**

Volume Seven: Presents episodes **55: Dana in Wonderland, 56: Crisis Point, and 57: Day Dreamer**. The battle continues to escalate, with terrible consequences. Zor seems to be going mad, Dana is becoming more rebellious, Bowie finds love and the mystery continues. **Available late May, 1992.**

Volume Eight: The Conclusion of the Southern Cross series! This is it, the final showdown with the Robotech™ Masters, the decimation of Earth, death and sacrifice, hard decisions and a terrible glimpse of the things to come. Includes episodes **58: Final Nightmare, 59: The Invid Connection, and 60: Catastrophe.** Available June or July 1992!

Approximate running time: 66 minutes for each volume.
VHS! Sorry no Beta. Sorry no laser video-discs.

Robotech™ RPG Books!

Palladium Books® publishes comprehensive role-playing RPG books about **Robotech™**

Robotech™: Book One: Macross. This is the basic role-playing game that recounts the *Robotech™ Defense Force's* valiant efforts to protect the Earth from the Zentraedi invaders. RDF mecha, Macross characters, and the SDF-1. **$11.95 plus $1.50 for postage.**

Robotech™: Book Two: The RDF Manual. A source book with more data on the RDF and the world. Includes the floor plans of the Daedalus and Prometheus. **$7.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling.**

Robotech™: Book Three: Zentraedi. A source book with more information about the giant Zentraedi. Includes the floor plans of the alien spaceships. **$7.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling.**

Robotech™: Book Four: Southern Cross. A giant 112 page source book with *all* the mecha and armies of the Southern Cross, as well as additional weapons, vehicles, bioroids and the Robotech™ Masters! **$11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.**

Robotech™: Book Five: Invid Invasion! This is another big 112 page source book with the famous and fabulous mecha of the *cyclones, Alpha fighters,* and *Beta Fighters*, not to mention a variety of weapons and the insidious Invid. Of course, this is the book that ties directly into the *Robotech™: The New Generation* series of videocassettes. **$11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.**

Additional adventure/source books for Robotech™ and other RPGs are also available. Send 50 cents for complete catalog.

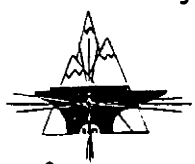
Copyright © 1992 Kevin Siembieda
Palladium Books® and Megaverse® are registered trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda.
Robotech™ and Robotech™ II: The Sentinels are trademarks owned and licensed by Harmony Gold USA, Inc. Copyright 1985 and 1988 respectively.

Palladium Books® Inc.
Dept. D
5926 Lonyo Ave
Detroit, MI 48210

GAMERS GUIDE

CHAINMAIL ARMOUR

Learn how to make this armour of the ancient warriors yourself.



For more information on obtaining your copy of The Complete Guide On How To Make Chainmail Armour send a SASE to: Rath Mor Armoury PO Box 392, Macomb IL 61455



Advanced Dungeons&Dragons®

FINE PEWTER FIGURINES

Our catalog features a large selection of licensed characters cast in fine pewter. BORIS VALLEJO tee shirts and pewter sculptures. Fantasy rubber stamps, suncatchers, posters, jewelry, key chains and more. Send $2.00 for catalog (refunded with purchase).

Fantasy Possessions

DEPT. D, SUITE 107 1740 44TH ST. S.W. #5
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49509

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS AND THE TSR LOGO ARE TRADEMARKS OWNED BY TSR INC.

MAIL EXPRESS!!!

P.O. BOX 1271
NEWTOWN, PA 18940

RPGs AND ACCESSORIES FROM 20% TO 30% OFF

INCLUDING:

TSR* *CAR WARS
PALLADIUM* *MAYFAIR
WEST END* *RAL PARTHA

SEND $1 FOR CATALOGUE REFUNDABLE WITH 1ST ORDER!

PLAY BY MAIL GAMING

PLAY BY MAIL WITH #1

Flying Buffalo has been running pbm games for over 20 years. Obviously we must be doing something right. Our ILLUMINATI™ pbm game won the ORIGINS™ and the GENCON™ awards for best pbm game this year. Call today for our free catalog or write: FBI, PO Box 1467 Dept D, Scottsdale AZ 85252
Phone 602-945-6917

PAPER MAYHEM

"The Informative PBM Magazine"

Subscribe to Paper Mayhem and discover the world of play-by-mail (PBM) gaming. We cover many of the PBM games with various subjects such as fantasy, sci-fi, historical, sports, etc. Each bimonthly issue brings you the latest in PBM gaming and ratings of PBM games and companies.

Paper Mayhem has been publishing news about PBM games and companies since 1983 and has improved to keep up with this ever expanding hobby.

Why delay and miss out on all the fun? Read Paper Mayhem and take advantage of PBM gaming.

Send subscriptions to: Paper Mayhem (Dept DM
1518 Adams Street
Ottawa, IL 61350-4770

U.S. Subscriptions:
Sample $5.00 1 year $24.00 2 years $42.00
Canadian Subscriptions:
Sample $5.50 1 year $31.00
Payable in US funds from US banks.

CAST YOUR OWN FANTASY FIGURES



SPECIAL
Our Fantasy Starter Set with a 3 Figure mold and metal for 25 figures only $18.50 post paid

Write for our catalog with over 200 molds only $1.00
(409) 364-2020

THE DUNKEN CO.
P.O. Box 95 D
Calvert, TX 77837

FIREBREATHER

HEROIC FANTASY
ROLE-PLAY AND COMBAT



FREE RULES AND SET-UP

HORIZON GAMES
4968 YUKON AVE N
NEW HOPE MN 55428

For more information about play-by-mail games and companies, send for The 5th Edition Journal of the PBM Gamer, which is a listing of PBM Companies and their games. Send $3.00 to Paper Mayhem, Dept. DM, 1518 Adams St., Ottawa, IL 61350.

"Spiral-Galaxy" "Game"

This exciting person-to-person game has you evolve your own game life-form, develope unique SI FI Weapons & engage your creative instincts in an intriguing, combatative explorational journey through the "Spiral-Galaxy"

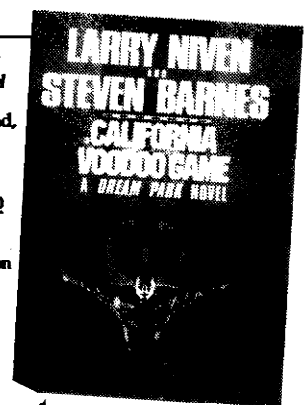
Rule Book $7
Start-Up $5
Both $10
U.S.$ Only
Haven Games Co., P.O. Box 52
Ruby, Va. 22545-0052

The Third & Best Dream Park Novel

Now in a Hardbound, signed, limited bookplate edition!

POSTPAID $30.00

Available only from Dream Park Corporation
Due to an aggravated health condition, Mr. Niven's signature may be digitized.



CREDIT CARDS:
PHONE 303-786-9777
FAX 303-786-9797

Send Check or Money Order To:
DREAM PARK CORPORATION
5575D Arapahoe Rd.
Boulder, CO 80303

Dream Park
Dedicated To Making Dream Park A Reality

Complete catalog from Dream Park Corporation: send $1.00 (refundable with your first order). Includes an update on the Dream Park™ Project.

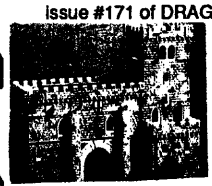
Dream Park is a trademark owned by Tower of Night Inc.
Used Under Authority. All Rights Reserved.

FREE 120-Page Catalog
(U.S. Only)
1 800 SAY GAME
WARGAMES WEST
3422 Central SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106
WELCOME

America's Fastest Mail Order
New Product Hotline: (505) 299-3368

WHOLESALE MINIATURES
GAMERS, NOW BUY DIRECT FROM THE COMPANY THAT MAKES OVER 70 DIFFERENT MINIATURES FOR HOBBY STORES COAST TO COAST!
25mm Miniature Starter Packs:
- 30 Assorted Orcs, 9 different - $17.50 + 2.75 S&H
- 20 Asrtd Humans, 9 diff - $13.50 + 2.25 S&H
- 30 Asrtd Dwarves, 12 diff - $17.50 + 2.75 S&H
- Medium Gaming Army: 32 Assorted Pieces (Orcs/Dwarves/Humans/Elves/Skeletons/Goblins, Wizards/Mounted Knights) - $19.50 + 2.75 S&H
- Lg. Gaming Army:50 asrtd pcs - $29.00 + 4.25 S&H
- 1 Catapult Siege Engine - $5.00 + .75 S&H

We now sell LiNKA kits!
The LiNKA Castle Kit #L7 received "FIVE STARS" when reviewed in issue #171 of DRAGON® Magazine!



Castle kit "L7"
$48.50
(Add $4.00 S&H.)

With plaster, and re-usable rubber molds, *it's easy!* Change the size! Change the shape! Do interiors! Design the castle *you* need, then create it! Display your miniatures, use castles and forts in wargaming, the possibilities are endless! Our catalog lists info on over 15 different LiNKA accessory kits!
SEND $4.00 FOR CATALOG
REFUNDABLE FROM FIRST ORDER
Fantasy Legions Dept. 5, 30 Surrey Lane
Sudbury, Massachusetts 01776
Painting Service | Dealer Discounts

Buy Minis Painted!

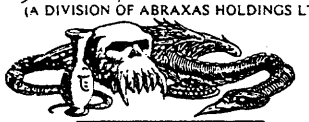


Fantasy & S.F. games, supplies, much more!
Call or write for
Free Catalog
(313) 259-1116
High Adventure Games Center
One Lafayette Plaisance.
Suite 1317 Detroit, Mi. 48207

LINKA CUSTOMERS
LINKA USA now sells direct!!!
LINKA'S re-usable building molds last for years. Design the building you want and build it. 16 kits available, all suitable for 15-25 mm figures. Money back guarantee. L-7 Castle Gatehouse (*****star review — Dragon) — $45. Make a castle the way you want it!! Add rooms. Add a tower!!! L-4 Stone Church (This kit will also build a castle — $29.) Please add $4. S & H per kit ordered. Dealer inquiries invited. Write for free flyer or send $5.00 for full color catalog.
("Dragon" is a trademark of TSR, Inc.)
LINKA USA, 1407 Trent Court
Lindenwold, N.J. 08021-1921
(609) 783-3306)

DUNGEON MAPS
Do your players consume dungeons faster than you can draw? Gain the lead! 32 pages of laser-print quality, hundreds of rooms, great dungeon themes. You populate!
Send $12.95 + $1.50 S&H
($2.50 if outside U.S.)
To: WyrmWorks•#356•Zionsville, IN 46077
(Indiana residents include 5% Sales Tax)

The Wizard's Corner II
(A DIVISION OF ABRAXAS HOLDINGS LTD.)



Saskatchewan's Centre for Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Wargaming Supplies
2101 Broad Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
Canada S4P 1Y6
Phone: (306)757-8544
Send $2 for catalog!

IMAGINATIVE MAIL ORDER
★ GREAT PRICES ★
RAL PARTHA GRENADIER
BATTLETECH CAR WARS
TSR MORE!
FAST SERVICE!
Send $1 for Catalog
(Refundable with first order!)
Box 100
Hawleyville, CT. 06440

KEEP YOUR CASH!
"I DON'T WANT YOUR MONEY"
No Cash, No Checks, No Charges
Games • Figures • Dice • More!
For complete details, send 1st class stamps or $1 check to:
MAD MAC c/o Adventures & Hobbies
1326 Dewey Avenue Rochester, NY 14613

KEEP YOUR CASH!
"I DON'T WANT YOUR MONEY"
No Cash, No Checks, No Charges
Games • Figures • Dice • More!
For complete details, send 1st class stamps or $1 check to:
MAD MAC c/o Adventures & Hobbies
1326 Dewey Avenue Rochester, NY 14613

DIAMOND DICE, Inc.
324 S. Fairview, Park Ridge, IL 60068
(708) 692-7165 — **DEALERS INVITED** —
All orders add $1.00 for postage / Send $1.00 for catalog
4-6-8 10-12-20 **DICE SALE** 4-6-8 10-12-20
BONUS—6 FREE dice with each set
All sets contain six different dice. (4-6-8-10-12-20)

Sets of solid dice — White, Red, Dark Red, Tan, Green, Blue, Dark Blue, Brown, Baby Blue, Violet, and Black	$1.50
Sets of inked solid dice — White, Red, Tan, Green, Blue and Purple	$2.50
Sets of solid dice/*silver* ink — Black, Dark Red, Dark Blue and Brown	$3.00
Sets of inked transparent dice — Green, Yellow, Diamond and Red	$3.00
Sets of transparent dice/*silver* ink — Blue, Purple, Red and Green	$3.50
Bag of 100 assorted solid dice — (Inked $21.00)	$16.00
Bag of 100 assorted transparent dice — (20 *Frosted* $4.00)	$21.00
Bag of 20 assorted 6-sided *dimpled* dice	$3.00
Bag of 8 assorted transparent *Jumbo* dice	$4.00
— NEW —	
Set of "Rainbow" inked diamond dice (each clear die inked in six different colors — Blue, Red, Green, Black Silver and Purple)	$4.00

all your gaming needs
GAME MASTER ltd.
bergen mall, paramus, n.j. 07652
(201) 843-3308
games, wargames & supplies & much more
send $3.00 for catalogue
refund with purchase

Arpeegeez
SAVE 25% off Retail Prices
On RPGs, Books & Accessories
For a ***FREE*** Catalog write to:
Arpeegeez
8210 E. Market Street
Suite 177
Warren, Ohio 44484

sunshine comics and games!

7921 Bird Road • Miami, FL 33155

Phone (305) 264-1250

- We carry all major companies such as TSR, INC. , FASA, PALLADIUM, etc.
- We also carry many minor companies such as BTRC.
- We keep up with new releases from all companies and are constantly restocking.
- We stock a large selection of miniatures, paints, brushes and related items.
- We receive DRAGON®, DUNGEON®, Challenge, White Dwarf, and many other gaming magazines.
- Discounts $ 1.00 - $44.00 = 10%
  45.00 - $74.00 = 15%
  75.00 or More = 20%
- Stop in or send S.A.S.E. with area of interest to above address.

*TSR, INC.

Genetically-altered motorcycle bandits. City fortresses. Daily fights for survival.

Welcome to anarchy.

AMERICHAOS 1994

A new role-playing experience.

For basic rulebook send $9.95 (+$3 shipping and handling) to: Dream Factory / 5300 North Braeswood / Suite 179 / Houston, TX 77096

Soldiers & Swords

is a new miniature and game manufacturing company. We offer a new, diverse line of miniatures as well as RPG and Fantasy Wargames. We bring an exciting freshness to Fantasy Gaming. All our products are of the highest quality and have been play-tested extensively. Our products are priced fairly. Most of our 25mm miniatures are $1.25 ea. If you want to add a new freshness to your gaming send a SASE to:

Soldiers & Swords
25 Fayette St.
Binghamton, NY 13901
(607)-723-4556

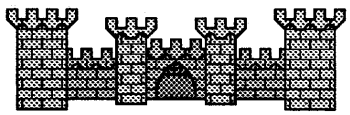
We'll send you our complete product list as well as a FREE subscription to our monthly news letter.

* **Dealer inquiries welcome.**
* **Canadian and Overseas distributorships available**



For Your Catalog of
Color Change Fantasy Art T-shirts
Send $3.00 USA / $4.25 Canada / £2.00 UK
Heat & light reactive color change sample materials included!
Celtic Design / Box 2002 / Danbury, CT 06813
Catalog cost credited to first order.

Magic • Monsters
Items of Power
Hidden Goals
Alliances • Treachery



Castle of Magic™

The intrigue and adventure of role playing in a fast paced board game!

Check your local game store or call us at:
Cloud Kingdom Games, Inc.
(800) 9-CLOUDK or (303) 449-8534
3405 Penrose Pl #205 • Boulder, CO • 80301
Licensed exclusively from RiddleMaster Games.

Gray Line Video

Beginner miniature figure painting video tutorial. Learn many techniques to improve the quality of your painted miniatures. Also included: interview with miniatures' sculptor. VHS only.

$15.95 plus 3.00 handling.
Send check or money order to:
8436 Easton Commons Dr.
Louisville, Ky 40242 (KY add 6%.)

PROMETHEAN PILGRIMAGE

- Join our growing array of readers!
- Each issue contains another episode in the continuing saga of the Enuga Lakogas!
- Plus the opportunity for an open forum on role-playing, computers, movies, and novels!
- Reader participation is encouraged. The format is still evolving and you can influence it!

send $24.00 for 12 monthly issues to:

P.O. Box 29446, Richmond, VA 23242-0446
make checks payable to Promethean Pilgrimage and be sure to include your name and address.

- Back issues containing the origins of the saga of the Enuga Lakogas are available at $3.50 each (Issue #1 1/92)

TERRAIN SPECIALTIES©



TERRAIN FOR ALL TABLE TOP GAMES

SMOOTH AND ROUGH EDGE HILLS

REVERSIBLE-
MOST SQUARES TERRAINED ON BOTH SIDES

CUSTOM LAYOUTS AND TERRAIN ACCESSORIES

* MODULAR * DURABLE
* CUSTOM WORK * ECONOMICAL

AT YOUR LOCAL HOBBY STORE

FOR FREE CATALOG CALL
1-800-927-5075

© COPYRIGHT COMICS UTAH, INC. 1992

Friends, Countrymen, Fellow Gamers!

Have you ever wanted a personal coat-of-arms like those held by medieval knights or royalty? Just send $2.00 S&H for "The Heraldry Guide", an in-depth work designed to help you create and register a battle-ready blazon! Our heralds, with old world hearts backed by modern day computer graphics, await your registered sketches and design ideas to be inducted into our lists of arms. Take the step to nobility, become a registered armsbearer! Send check or money order to...

National Registry of Medieval Roleplayers
PO box 6068 Salem, OR 97304

THE LAST GRENADIER

GAMES WORKSHOP
SPECIALIST STOCKIST

335 N.San Fernando Blvd.
Burbank, Ca. 91502
(818) 848-9144

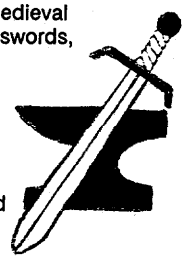
16 E.Duarte Rd.
Arcadia, Ca. 91006
(818) 445-4064

8823 Reseda Blvd.
Northridge, Ca. 91324
(818) 886-3639

DRAGON'S LAIR
5660 Pacific Coast Hwy.
Long Beach, Ca. 90804
(213) 494-8366

CITADEL- TSR- PALLADIUM
STEVE JACKSON- RAL PARTHA
ICE- FASA- CHAOSIUM- CHESSEX
FOR CATALOG SEND $2.00

EXCITING NEW CATALOG:
Includes a variety of medieval and fantasy weapons, swords, knives, daggers. Also, wonderfully detailed pewter dragons/wizards, etc., with Austrian crystals. To receive your copy, please send $1.00 (refunded with your first order) to: SteelCraft, P.O. Box 5264, Lynnwood, WA 98046.



EPTIMUS SERIATIM PRODUCTS

After years of painstaking preparation the definitive generic PC/NPC (for the organized GM) sheet is now available. This sheet is specially designed with ample room for statistics, equipment, treasure, history, and much more. It can be used with most role playing games.
for $5.00 (plus 1.40 shipping and handling) you receive 100 PC/NPC sheets that will fit any standard 3 hole binder.
Send check or money order to:
E.S.P.
P.O. Box 2027
W. Peabody, MA 01960
(please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery)

Free Catalog!

Free Write for your free catalog of games and gaming supplies! In the United States and Canada, write to: TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop, c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: TSR Mail Order Catalogue, TSR Ltd, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. Send for it today!

Free

Free

Free

Free

REALMS OF FANTASY



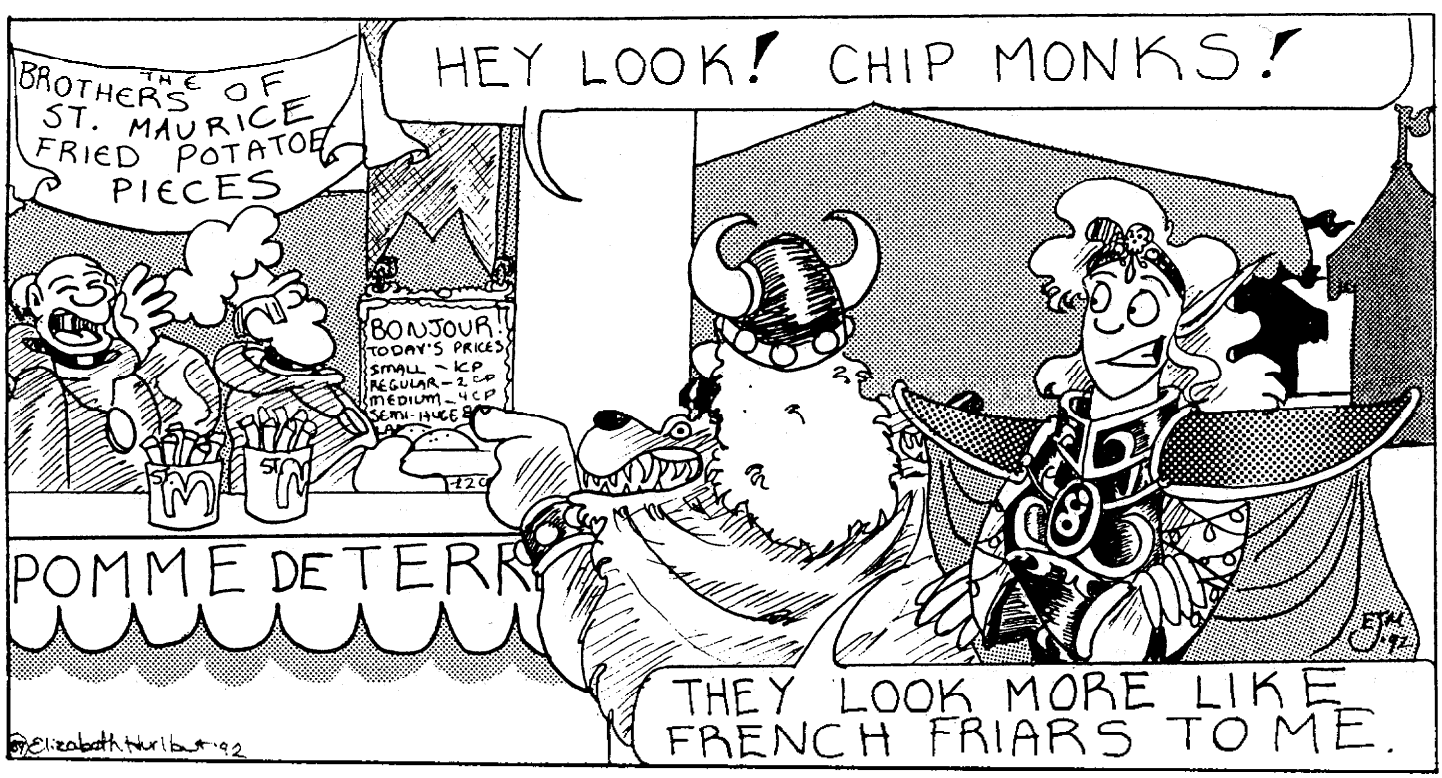
A fantasy play-by-mail game for 20 to 30 players per game. Each player is an immortal wizard seeking fame and glory. Being immortal, a player cannot be eliminated from the game, and can always get revenge....

A game of magic and conquest on a unique map generated from 10 types of terrain, with 20 different races.

Other postal games we offer:

Continental Rails	**Spiral Arm**
Feudal Lords	**Kingdom**
Gameplan	**El Mythico**
Kings & Things*	**Supremacy**

For free information on our games, write:
Graaf Simulations
P.O. Box 96
St. Clair Shores, MI 48080



By Elizabeth Hurlbut

Through the LOOKING Glass

©1992 by Robert Bigelow

Photos and painting by Mike Bethke



Wall of Skulls (Lance & Laser Models)

Little deceptions: decoys in miniatures war games

Real Scud or fake Scud?

The air campaign over Iraq during the Persian Gulf war was credited with being the major reason that the ground war was so short and relatively bloodless for Coalition forces. However, this massive effort raised a number of questions. Why did the U.S. Air Force downplay its success halfway through the campaign, after showing us video after video of successful target strikes? Why did the estimates of target destruction and numbers of destroyed vehicles decrease, with reports becoming more guarded as the sorties increased? One last question was paramount in many people's minds: If Coalition planes are destroying all those Scud missiles, launchers, and sites, how are the Iraqis still managing to launch Scuds in areas where Coalition aircraft rule the skies? The answer to most of these questions can be answered in one word—decoys!

The Iraqi military proved to be much more sophisticated in the art of camouflage and decoy-use than anyone in the Coalition had previously thought. Decoys can be made to resemble any prime military target in existence today. With heaters and weak electronic emitters, decoys give off a "signature" that can fool thermal and electronic sensors and give the enemy readings expected of a real target. It is especially difficult for modern jets to distinguish decoys from real vehicles, as the jets travel so fast that visual sighting is useless and only heat or electronic imaging is available. Even "slow" aircraft that travel under the speed of sound have trouble, as many decoys are indistinguishable from the real things except on close inspection.

Additionally, decoys are relatively cheap. In many cases, very good decoys cost under $50,000. While this may sound expensive to you or me, compare this to a tank that can cost over a million dollars even for a poor one, or to artillery pieces that may cost several hundred thousand dollars each. There is a substantial savings when these decoys are destroyed by weapons costing nearly as much as their targets. Worse, even satellites frequently cannot tell the difference between decoys and real vehicles. You thus have reasons to hesitate before making claims about target destruction—and when equipment seems to pop up immediately after being destroyed, sticking your neck out with claims of equipment kills seems like a really bad idea.

Miniatures' product ratings

*	Poor
**	Below average
***	Average
****	Above average
*****	Excellent

The Iraqi troops also made good use of fabric, paint, and wood framing to create illusions of damage where there wasn't any and to cover damage where there was. This camouflage forced pilots to hit targets, even those previously hit multiple times and destroyed, to make sure that those targets were really out of action. Paint jobs depicting cracks and bomb craters also made buildings or runways appear to be seriously damaged. The perceived damage caused mission briefers to classify a target as destroyed even though it was barely damaged and still functional. There is now evidence that this occurred on a large scale and that Iraq learned its lessons from outside sources and the combatants of World War II. During World War II, whole cities, industries, and military targets in Britain, Germany, Japan, and the U.S.A. "disappeared" through the magic of paint and screens. These targets turned into blocks of housing, parks, rivers, or even lakes to confuse potential bombers or recon flights.

We see now that intelligence officers and photo readers did not have an easy job confirming the destruction of actual targets. Without large intelligence networks or fifth columns in place, such as the resistance movements in many occupied nations in World War II, success is difficult to confirm without close visual inspection. This cannot be held against anyone and just means that you have to hit the targets over and over again and force your pilots to take higher and higher risks as they fly in lower for a confirmed kill.

The use of decoys and the need to gather accurate combat intelligence can serve as the basis for a miniatures or role-playing game using TSR's TOP SECRET/S.I.™ or SNIPER™ games, GDW's TWILIGHT: 2000* rules, or many other military games. The GM should set up a base that has several identical weapon sites and hard points, of which only a few are actual units and the rest are decoys. These units can be distinguished only by contact with the unit or from very close proximity. All the positions should be covered by guards and weapon pits. The party of infiltrators has the job of deciding which units are real in preparation for an air strike to come later. This can be challenging for both players and GMs.

Lance & Laser Models Inc.

P.O. Box 14491
Columbus OH 43214

Lance & Laser is a small company that produces a number of well-done figures that appeal to a lot of people. It seems to allow its sculptors a wider scope than most companies, and a number of miniatures have been produced. that appear to have limited uses or are different from what we are used to. I purposely said "appear" to have limited uses, because on closer examination a wide variety of uses can be found. To prove this, let's examine a couple of the pieces.

134 Wall of Skulls *****

This would definitely appear to be a limited-use figure. The miniature consists of a 38 mm × 11 mm × 20 mm pile of skulls carefully piled one on top of another, with vacant eye sockets staring outward. The pile is three to five skulls in height, and the skulls go all the way around in an long oval shape. The ends are held in place by bones and wooden stakes tied with rope and braced by more bones. No lower jaws are on any of the skulls.

No mold lines are visible except on the sides of the base, and the skulls are well defined and separate from each other except where they are joined into the "wall." The skulls have varying degrees of damage, ranging from dents and cracks to holes of the kind inflicted by large blunt objects and crossbow bolts. All of the skulls whose crowns are visible have ridges and cracks typical of human anatomy, and a few have ridges such as would be common for a fantasy orc.

This wall can be used as a boundary marker at the edge of a forbidden or mysterious country. It could serve as a good anchor for a gate to a necromancer's keep or the entrance to a graveyard. A game master could spread panic among players whose characters discover this wall outside the entrance to a dungeon that they have visited, letting the adventurers figure out who or what could have set the skulls out so neatly. It could also be a backdrop for an undead diorama. This piece is recommended at $1.75.

135 Ghost ****

Ghosts hold a particular fascination for most people and a terror for most player characters. Fortunately, you don't run into many of these creatures in a fantasy role-playing game, but this is a good example of one that you might someday meet.

This ghost rises from an oval base that represents a grave site. In the rear corner is a cracked and weathered tombstone with a semilegible epitaph. A fringe of grass surrounds the tombstone and gives way to hard, flat land. The ghost rises from his grave in a swirl of robes, standing over 40 mm tall and looking like an undead tornado. A skeletal rib cage shows through the robes, bony hands protrude from the sleeves, and a grinning skull shows from beneath an overhanging hood.

This figure will require a little work. The bottom of the base is uneven, causing it to rock slightly. This can be easily fixed by filing the base, but you'll have to be careful not to trim too much. A very evident mold line runs around the figure's front and back halves (the mold line in this case was more of a groove), but this is also easily cleaned up with a sharp knife and a little filing.

The figure has some restrictions in location because of the tombstone, but you can ignore it and use the figure anywhere. This is recommended at $1.40 each.



Rampaging Red Dragon (Thunderbolt Mountain)



Ghost (Lance & Laser Models)

Thunderbolt Mountain Miniatures

656 East McMillan
Cincinnati OH 45206-1991

Thunderbolt Mountain Miniatures

70 Harcourt Street
Newark, Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM NG 241 R4

1012 Rampaging Red Dragon *****

Among the newest releases from Thunderbolt Mountain is a new series of dragons done in Thunderbolt's unique style. First in this new series is a red dragon throwing a temper tantrum. The figure is made of lead and scaled for 25 mm. The kit contains 11 pieces, including the one-piece base, all of which must be assembled using the instructions and a little care. The miniature measures over 210 mm from nose to tail, and each wing is over 150 from wing root to the first outside claw. The base is 58 mm × 8 mm and has a barren-rock formation molded onto the top, including some rocks that act as the support for the dragon. No vegetation is present.

This dragon presents the image of being truly upset in every way. It is perched on its right rear leg and the base of its tail as if lunging forward to attack with all three remaining feet. The front feet have the claws nearly fully extended, while the back foot makes a swiping maneuver. The mouth is open, with its tongue fully extended and teeth clearly visible. The nos-



Female Centaur with Bow (Wargames)



Cleric with Staff (Wargames)

trils are flared, and bony crests protect slitted eyes just behind the twisting horns. This figure has excellent scale detail, with clearly defined edge separations and depressions. Spinal ridges extend from head to mid-tail, with some rising to very long points. The large wings are partially folded and swept back, but appear to be poised for instant use

The model assembles fairly easily. No flash was present except for small bits of lead, at the tips of some of the claws, that almost fell off on their own. The fit on the parts is very good except for the rear legs, which need light trimming in the socket and a little filling when done. The wings required a little filling after they have been put on, and I recommend the use of epoxy or small pins in the ball joint on the wings for added strength, letting each part dry completely before moving on.

This is an excellent model. I believe the small problems on my model might not exist on others, and this may be due to the slight shrinkage of some parts. You should have some experience with metal kits if you want a high-quality finished model, but this kit is suitable for beginners thanks to the close fit of most parts. A good kit, this is highly recommended even at $26.95.

ESDEVIUM, the GAMES shop

THE MAIL-ORDER SPECIALISTS

Come to Esdevium Games and see the best display of games in the country
Open 6 days a week
Fastest telephone mail order service

from Chaosium . . .
For Call of Cthulhu
Call of Cthulhu 5th Edn Rulebook. Easier to use, with more monsters, spells, weapons and statistics for important characters from Lovecraftian fiction £12.50
Tales of The Miskatonic Valley £10.95
Continues the exploration of Lovecraft country
Fearful Passages £10.95
Shorter '20s adventures revolving around different modes of transport
Plus new Cthulhu 'zine:
Unspeakable Oath (PP) £2.50
Recent releases
Cthulhu Casebook £11.95
Fatal Experiment £11.50
Blood Brothers £11.50
Curse of Cthulhu £11.95
Dark Designs £11.50
Return to Dunwich £11.50
Orient Express £23.95
Kingsport £11.50

from R Talsorian Games
Compendium of Modern Arms £10.95
Corporate Report 2020 Nos 1&2 £5.50 ea.
Cyberpunk 2020 ..... £12.95

from Wizard of the Coast for **Talislanta**
Atlantis (Campaign World) (Band) £11.95
Cyclopaedia Talislanta II £5.75
CT III: Wilderlands of Zoran £5.95
CT IV: Western lands £5.95
CT V: Eastern Lands £5.95
CT VI: Desert Kingdoms £5.95
Talislantan World Book £11.95
Naturalists' Guide £7.50
Talislanta Geographica £3.95

from Phage Press
Amber RPG £13.95
Marquee Press
Societies Sourcebook £7.95
Eidolon — a ghosts RPG £7.95
Legendary Lives RPG £11.95



from Taskforce
New Starfleet Battles modules
J: Fighters £11.95
K: Fast Patrol Ships £11.99
P3: Playtest Scenarios 1 ..... £2.95
Tactics Manual — Captain's Edn £8.95
and
Kings Bounty — Fantasy Boardgame £18.95
Columbus (Viceroys Expansion 1) £9.50
Viceroys £22.95

XTR
with a new game in each issue . . . the very successful Command Magazine, Issue 14 (Victory at Midway) £8.50
Back issues also available ..... £7.95 ea.
13, Desert Storm; 12, Chaco (Bolivia vs Paraguay 1930s); 11, Hougoumont (Waterloo — tactical lvl); 9, Inchon; 7, Kadesh (1285 BC); 6, Krim (Crimea 1942)

and from GMT
Thunderbolt: Apache Leader Solitaire game of Hel.copter warfare £21.95
eagerly awaited sequel to
Hornet Leader (Solo air) £21.95

for **Vampire**
from White Wolf Publishing
Storyteller's Screen £4.95
The Player's Guide £8.95
Succubus Club £8.95
Vampire T-shirt (L or XL) £11.95
Alien Hunger £5.95
The Prelude Book £5.95
Milwaukee By Night £10.95

for **Ars Magica**
from White Wolf Publishing
A Winter's Tale £7.95
South of the Sun £8.50
Medieval Bestiary £8.95
Black Death £7.50
Mythic Places £5.95
More Mythic Places £5.95
from Atlas Games
Festival of the Damned £5.95



from WEG latest releases for
TORG — The Possibility Wars
Storm Knights Guide to the Possibility Wars £8.95
Tharkold £10.95
Nightmare Dream (Novel) £2.95
High Lord of Earth (Adv) £6.95
Temple of Rec Statek £7.50

for **Star Wars**
Planet of the Mists £5.95

These are just some of our games. Our catalogue contains details of virtually all games available in the UK. Send 25p in stamps & 29p SAE (overseas 4 IRC) for a copy (FREE with orders over £8).
Telephone Order with Access/Visa/Switch. Payment in £s Sterling please.
Trade enquiries welcome. UK postage and packing — below £10, add £1, below £27, add £1.80; £27 and over — post free.

ESDEVIUM GAMES (OD)
6 Wellington Street
Aldershot, Hants GU11 1DZ
☎ (0252) 311443 (Shop Hours)
(0252) 722269 (Other Times)

Wargames Inc.

Box 278
Triadelphia WV 26059

This month, we welcome another line of figures to the review column—Metal Magic. This line is produced in Germany and includes a large number of different fantasy and SF figures that are marketed in the U.S. by Wargames Inc., which many of you have probably seen at major gaming conventions. This month, we'll review two figures from this line.

C1037a Monster (Female Centaur with Bow) ****½**

This figure is made of lead and is in true 25 mm scale. The horse body measures 20 mm tall and 25 mm long from chest to flank, with a tail extending beyond that. Muscle detail is good, with only a few angular areas. Joint and vein detail is visible on the legs, with a fringe of long curly hair just above the hooves. The tail hangs down and curls slightly at the end, and individual strand detail is good. The horse body is slightly undersized for a centaur, but not obviously so; this could be explained by the fact that this is a female

A very noticeable mold line across the back can be removed by a healthy fingernail without damage to the model. Some mold lines are also on the inside of the rear legs, and care should be taken when cleaning and smoothing these areas.

The human half extends another 16 mm up from the horse body. A fur-trimmed quiver of arrows on her right side is held by a chain belt; in her right hand she carries a short bow, and her left arm is covered by a detailed guard. Her loose blouse is cinched by chains and a belt with an ornate buckle; a well-done necklace and pendant are present. Her face is strange, as most of us at the shop notice its similarity to the Cowardly Lion from the movie, *The Wizard of Oz,* complete with overhanging lip. Hair detail is very good, with enough waves and curls to complicate any painter's day.

The bad points on this figure are the mold lines. One slightly raised line runs through the forehead on the left and goes on to the chin, also passing through the arm guard and the bow. The good news is that the mold line is cleaned off easily with a little care. Even with the slightly small horse body, this figure is well recommended at $2.89. Note that this figure is made of very soft lead, so care must be taken with it.

C1002b Cleric with Staff * * * *½

This figure, which stands slightly tall at 26 mm, is an excellent representation of a medieval Catholic bishop. He has long robes, a woven belt, a miter with a cross in bas-relief, and a shepherd's crook, the latter in his right hand (he is delivering a blessing with his left). The sash of office hangs from his neck on both sides, embroidered with the cross and trimmed with fringes. A kindly, middle-aged face with a pug nose completes the figure.

This figure is very well done. One visible fault involves the left hand, where the curled-over fingers are slightly flat. That hand and the miter's cross also lack the detail present on the rest of the figure. The staff is joined to the robes, and you will probably have to paint in a separation.

This is not an adventurer-type figure in fantasy gaming, representing instead a high-level cleric with his own church, keep, and land. He would be at home in Chaosium's PENDRAGON* game or in modern scenarios set up to the early 1970s. Care should be taken with this figure, as it is made with a very soft lead. This is recommended at $1.69 each, including a small, square, plastic base.

Grenadier Models
P.O. Box 305
Springfield PA 19064

Grenadier Models UK Ltd.
25 Babbage Rd, Deeside, Clwyd, Wales
UNITED KINGDOM CH5 2QB

5601 Witch * * * *½

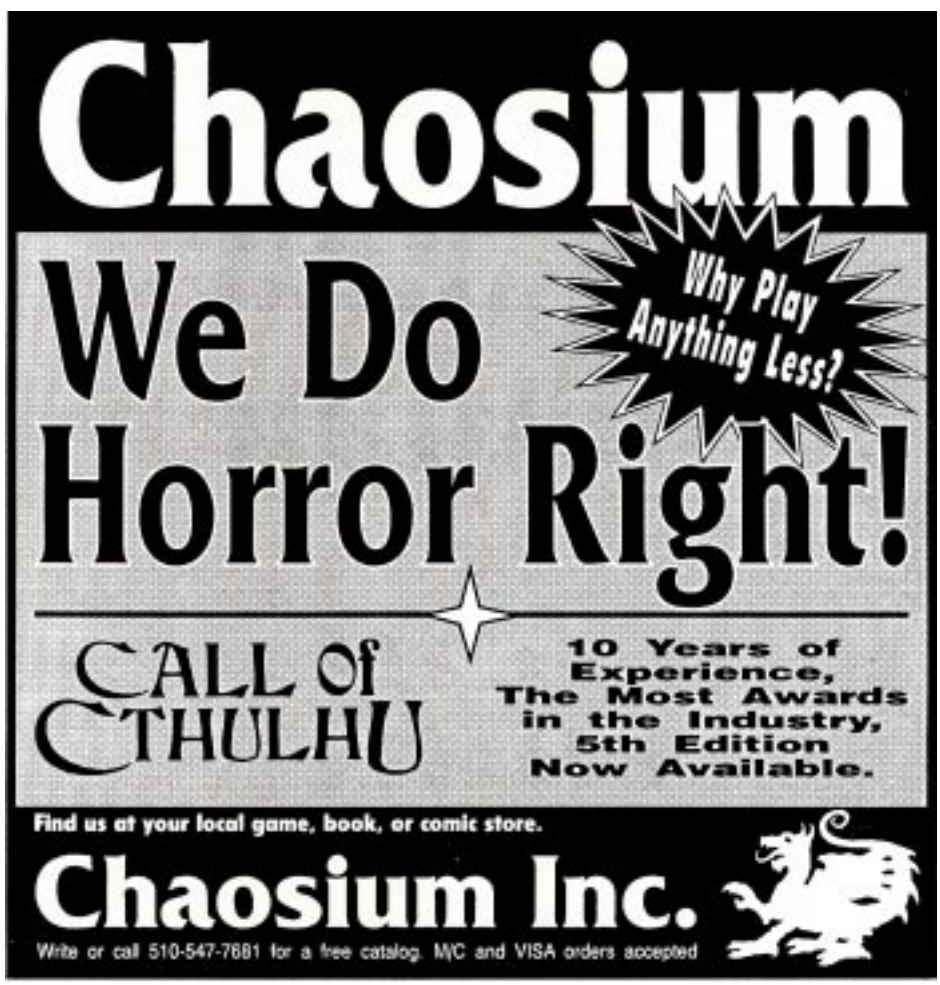
This new miniature from Grenadier steps straight out of "Hansel and Gretel." Sculpted by Nick Lund, this figure is very close to how I had always envisioned a witch to look. The figure is made for true 25-mm scale and stands 22 mm from feet to eyes. The witch is a little old lady standing straight with her head bent slightly forward. She wears a simple, long dress with a hem sweeping the ground and an open oval front. In her right hand she holds a long, intricately carved staff bearing what looks like a partial skull at the top and intertwining branches. Her left hand is closed with thumb extended, so she is either hitchhiking or has her spell components clutched tightly. She has a simple belt, and a second strap secures a large components bag at her left hip. Hanging from the belt are a couple of amulets and bags secured by long drawstrings. Around her neck is another amulet, one that looks like a crystal.

Her face is good, with high, gaunt cheekbones and skin pulled tight with age, though she seems to be grimacing. On very close observation, teeth may be seen in her mouth, a challenge for the best of painters. Her hairline has receded far back, and sparse, long strands fall past her shoulders. Excellently done wrinkles adorn her forehead and upper face.



Witch (Grenadier Models)

The figure delivered to me is good, but it had an excessive amount of flash. The space between the body and staff was almost totally filled, with some heavy flash close to the body and staff that will require some careful work with a knife to remove. The mold lines under both arms were also raised and needed trimming, as did the lines on the shoulders to a lesser extent. A cat at the rear of the base looks





Savannah Master Hovercraft (Ral Partha)



Dwarf with Crossbow (Grenadier Models)



WFT-1 Wolf Trap (Ral Partha)

as if it is rubbing against the witch. This feline is a good touch but has some pitting and an indistinct, blobby face that comes close to detracting from the figure. You'll have to look the figure over carefully before going to work on it.

This figure could be used as a witch or could play the part of a gypsy in the AD&D® RAVENLOFT™ setting. Even with the work needed to improve it, this is recommended at $1.75 each for its uniqueness.

8133 Dwarf with Crossbow *****

Dwarves are rapidly becoming one of the most modeled of fantasy-game races, regardless of their gaming scale. While this dwarf from Julie Guthrie could be termed just another dwarf, a number of interesting details make this one unique.

The figure is scaled to true 25 mm and stands 18 mm to the eyes. The miniature is made of lead and has the traditional high oval base common to Grenadier figures. There was no flash, and the mold line was well camouflaged and did not show up to any degree even after priming. The detail is clear and deeper than usual.

This dwarf figure is armored but not in the "walking-tank" style so common to dwarven miniatures. The figure is dressed much as a support troop or middle-class dwarf. His feet are clad in large boots which have the faintest traces of a mold line. His upper body is protected by breast and back plates; the rest of his body is covered by lamellar armor that covers the arms to the elbow, runs under the plate, then falls to the tops of the boots. A split in the front of the armor exposes an undergarment that covers the rest of the body, including the lower arms but not the head. A simple belt and buckle secure a ration pouch on his left side, and a chest strap secures a large battle axe to his back as a back-up weapon. His primary weapon is a well-molded crossbow in a loading position on his left arm. This crossbow includes a visible trigger, a bolt that rides slightly higher than the grooved path that it is fired along, and an upper lever for setting the string. In his right hand he holds a bolt by the shaft, as if preparing to load it. His head is covered by a simple helmet, and his hair waves out in the back as if windblown. A well-trimmed beard falls down his face. The chest is good including a slight grimace and a bulbous nose.

This is a good support figure for an army and also a great adventurer. Careful painting will give you a figure you can be proud of. A single hair from your comb will provide a string for the crossbow. It's recommended at $1.50 each.

Ral Partha Enterprises

5938 Carthage Court
Cincinnati OH 45212

Ral Partha Enterprises

c/o Minifigs
1/5 Graham Road, Southampton
UNITED KINGDOM S02 0AX

This month we review a number of 'Mechs and vehicles commonly used in FASA's BATTLETECH* game. Most of the 'Mech models on the market today are between 5 mm and 7 mm scale, which makes 1 mm equal to 1-1½'. All figures are made of lead.

20-828 Savannah Master Hovercraft *****

The Savannah Master is a five-ton recon and light attack vehicle, described on page 6 of FASA's *Technical Readout 3026*. The miniature itself comes four to a pack, each measuring about 13 mm long × 7 mm wide × 6.5 mm tall. Close examination of a vehicle shows it to be an almost exact duplicate of the illustration, except for the pilot and a small increase in the size of the steering vane that was probably done to make the casting easier. All vanes, sensor boxes, weapon mounts, and headlights are in the correct places. Areas that appear to be mold defects turn out to be separations in armor when compared to the book illustration.

This vehicle is highly recommended, as it can serve many different purposes. It could be used as an armored recon vehicle in Steve Jackson Games' OGRE* or GEV* games, or in FASA's RENEGADE LEGION* game. It could even be used in a small-scale version of the ever-popular but out-of-print STRIKER* rules for science-fiction miniatures, by GDW. This vehicle is so versatile that it is almost a "must have." It's highly recommended at $3 per pack.

The page numbers given for further descriptions and illustrations used for comparison will be found in FASA's *Technical Readout 3050*. When I review figures, I judge them in part based on the illustrations provided, which are supposed to be the "official" drawings. I understand that sculptors can take a certain license with figures, but they should get the basics correct. The miniatures are still very suitable for use in BATTLETECH games, even with mistakes or modifications, and the perfectionist is the only one who may be concerned.

20-898 IMP-3E Imp ****

The illustration and the statistics for the Imp-3E are found on page 210 of the book. This 'Mech, listed among the Inner Sphere assault 'Mechs, weighs 100 tons, and no variants are given.

The Imp miniature stands 49 mm tall and suffers from an uneven base. This is easily solved with filing. The body is 35 mm at its widest and looks a bit like R2D2 (the 'droid from *Star Wars)* with long legs. There are quite a few differences between the picture and the miniature, so we'll start with the head and work down.

The upper dome contains two weapon or sensor boxes that are not shown on the illustration or listed on the location tables. A very obvious mold line runs across the top of the head, left to right, but it is easy to clean. The miniature's left arm has a large pulse laser pointing to the sky (mine has since been modified to point forward, which was very easy to do). The right arm differs greatly from the book illustration. The lower row of LRM-15s is cut off short, being located on the bottom edge of the arm instead of toward the middle, and the bottom of the hand is flatter than it is



IMP-3E Imp (Ral Partha)

supposed to be with no flexion. The center torso has two extended weapons which are probably lasers but are not shown in the illustration (I grant that they could be retracted). Neither leg is correct, as both are too boxy and lack the flair and bulges shown in the book drawing.

Having said all of this, the miniature does capture the spirit of the 'Mech and is the only thing available that is even close to the vehicle. This unit has few uses outside of BATTLETECH games. With the ammo setup described, I doubt it would be much good in continuous combat. Priced at $5.75 each, this piece is recommended.

20-811 WFT-1 Wolf Trap * * * * ½

The Wolf Trap is a 45-ton 'Mech operated by House Kurita as an answer to the Wolfhound 'Mech. The miniature is 39 mm tall and 21 mm wide across the shoulders. No other variants are given; this 'Mech is not in full production.

The miniature is fairly true to the book illustration. The legs are well done and seem to be moving, albeit in a jerky way. The entire miniature looks off-balance because of the pose. Both arms are correct, including the number of fingers and joints, the shoulder pin and joint on the left arm, and the hole in the AC-10 and shaping of the right arm. Major differences exist between the figure and book picture over the middle of the 'Mech's torso. The cooling pack on the back is not big enough to match the one in the illustration; it needs bigger ports and a higher profile.

This 'Mech has not been as effective in tabletop games at our club as was intended. It gets beaten on a regular basis by the Wolfhound even when played by different people. This 'Mech is basically for BATTLETECH games only and is recommended at $4.25 each.

That's it for this month. If you need to reach me, call Friend's Hobby Shop at: (708) 336-0790, at the following times:

M,W,Th,F: 2-10 P.M. CST
Sat & Sun: 10 A.M.-5 P.M. CST

You can also write to me at this address:

Robert Bigelow
c/o Friend's Hobby
1411 Washington St.
Waukegan IL 60085

* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION MEMORIAL PROGRAM®

WE'RE FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE

American Heart Association

This space provided as a public service.

HOLD ON TO YOUR SANITY, RAFM HAS

CALL of CTHULHU



2921 Nightgaunt $3.00
Demonic Servitor
2922 Deep One $4.00
Mutant Fishman
2923 Dimensional Shambler (2) ... $4.00
Transcendental Alien Fiends
2924 Great Race of Yith $7.00
Monstrous Alien Being
2925 Servitors of the Outer Gods ... $4.00
Parasitic Entities
2926 Cthonian $7.00
Carnivorous Giant Worm
2927 Shoggoth $7.00
Protoplasmic Horror
2928 Flying Polyp $5.00
Aerial Horror
2929 Formless Spawn of Tsathoggua $3.00
Amorphous Guardian



RAFM FANTASY MINIATURES

Rafm Company Inc.
20 Parkhill Road E.
Cambridge Ont.
Canada
N1R 1P2
1-519-623-4832

Send $3 For Catalogue

Convention Calendar

Continued from page 64

MIGSCON XIII, May 30-31 ❇

This historical gaming convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in Hamilton, Ontario. Events include WRG*, DBA*, ASL*, and BATTLETECH* games. Other activities include Napoleonics, Ancients, and American Civil War games. Write to: MIGSCON, c/o Apt. #8, 142 Caroline St. S., Hamilton, Ontario, CANADA L8P 3K9; or call Brian at: (416) 525-7730.

LAGACON 14, June 6 **PA**

This convention will be held at the Fraternal Order of Eagles Hall, 116 N 8th St., Lebanon, Pa. Events include AD&D®, BATTLETECH*, and ASL* tournaments; MERC: 2000*, AXIS & ALLIES*, TWILIGHT 2000*, and SUPREMACY* games; beginners' games; and a dealers' area. Ask about group discounts. Write to: Lebanon Area Gamers' Assoc., 806 Cumberland St., Lebanon PA 17042; or call: (717) 274-8706 weeknights or Saturdays.

TANELORN '92, June 6-8 ❖

This convention will be held at the Robertson Gardens Convention Centre in Robertson, Brisbane, Queensland. Events include AD&D®, BATTLETECH*, TALISMAN*, SPACE CRUSADE*, DIPLOMACY*, and CYBERPUNK* games, with Napoleonics, food, and RPG sessions in individual rooms. Write to: Club Tanelorn, GPO Box 2148, Brisbane, Queensland 4001, AUSTRALIA; or call: 0011-61-7-209-7336.

MOBI-CON '92, June 12-14 **AL**

This SF&F/gaming convention will be held at the Days Inn in Mobile, Ala. Proceeds will benefit the Penelope House shelter for abused women and children. Guests include Margaret Weis and comics artists. Activities include writing workshops, an art show and auction, miniatures painting, a dealers' room, a costume contest, seminars, videos, and gaming. Registration: $13.50/weekend before June 1; $16/weekend at the door. Single-day rates vary. Write to: MOBI-CON INC., P.O. Box 161257, Mobile AL 36616.

CONFIGURATION III, June 13-14 **OK**

This convention will be held at the Days Inn in Tulsa, Okla. Events include AD&D®, D&D®, BATTLETECH*, CHAMPIONS*, VAMPIRE*, SHADOWRUN*, and STAR TREK* tournaments, with board-game tournaments, historical miniatures games, open gaming, and a video room. Registration: $4/weekend preregistered; $7/weekend at the door. Write to: CONFIGURATION, 3617 E. 24th St., Tulsa OK 74115; or call Mike at: (918) 836-8008.

ORGANIZED KHAN-FUSION IV
June 20-21

This convention will be held at the Embers in Carlisle, Pa. Activities include AD&D® games, a railroad tournament, dealers, a miniatures-painting contest, and over 50 gaming events. Registration fees vary from $6-10. Write to: M. Foner's Games Only Emporium, 200 Third St., New Cumberland PA 17070; or call (717) 774-6676.

LEGACY '92, June 26-28 **TX**

This convention will be held at the Comfort Inn Convention Center in Arlington, Texas. Events include the MechForce Southwest Regional BATTLETECH* tournament, gaming, speakers, miniatures-painting contests, a movie room, a dealers' area, and an auction. Special hotel rates are available. Registration: $10/weekend preregistered. Write to: LEGACY '92, 1604 Canfield No. 1107, Ft. Worth TX 76120; or call our 24-hour hotline: (214) 601-9032 and enter 6552#.

CAPITAL CON VIII, June 27-28 **IL**

This convention will be held at the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield, Ill. Activities include RPGA™ Network tournaments; role-playing, board, computer, and miniatures games; a miniatures-painting contest; and a game auction. Registration: $10/weekend, including game costs. Write to: CAPITAL CON VIII, c/o Tom Lawrence, 2557 Somerton Rd., Springfield IL 62702.

How effective was your convention listing? If you are a convention organizer, please write to the editors and let us know if our "Convention Calendar" served your needs. Your comment are always welcome.

And now for something completely different—
The NAUGHTYHEDRON™!



GAMESCIENCE, the people who brought you the *patented* **ZOCCHIHEDRON™ D100**--the dice they said *no one* could make!--and the **DECKAIDER™ D10**, does it again! We've brought you the **PENTAIDER™ D50**, the unique **7-SIDED DICE™**, the **QUINTAHEDRON™ D5**, the **3-SIDED DICE** and even **BINARY DICE**. And *now* we've been reduced to **NAUGHT!** We've taken you where no one has gone before, and now we take you where nothing's even been yet! It's our *patented* **DECAHEDRON D10** design, available with **BLANK FACES!** The **NAUGHTYHEDRON™** is perfect for your own original ideas and designs! (Or possibly for sinister secret purposes, but we're not telling!) Available in limited quantity, *only* in assorted **GEM™** colors. Order item **GS 301N**, just **$1.50** each (UNinked only).

AND SPEAKING OF GAMESCIENCE FIRSTS...

5-SIDED QUINTAHEDRON™ AND 50-SIDED PENTAIDER™ DICE!
Now there's a *D5* (a special D10 numbered 1 through 5 twice)--just the thing when playing Mayfair's **CHILL®** or other games calling for just such a die roll--AND a *D50* (a special D10 numbered 00-10-20-30-40 twice), for generating lottery numbers, random selection of spells from **AD&D®** lists or other gaming uses. **GEM™** D5s or D50s are available in Diamond, Sapphire, Emerald, Amethyst, Ruby, Smoke, Ice, Laser Yellow, Laser Blue, Laser Red, Amber and Aqua (D5 also in Laser Green) for **$1.50** each uninked, **$2.00** inked.

7-SIDED DICE PAIRS (GS 7727) **$6.00**
The True 7-sided dice has *only 7 faces!* Each set of these unique dice provides 1 Black and 1 White die. They're ideal for generating days of the week, Lotto numbers, damage modifiers and so forth. (Available through *exclusive* arrangement with bb Games Academy.)

***NEW, IMPROVED 3-SIDED DICE!* (GS 10713)** **$1.50**
GAMESCIENCE's improved 3-sided dice is now imprinted on a wooden 6-sided shape with the numbers 1-2-3 imprinted in Red and in Blue.

DECKAIDER™ 7-PIECE POLYHEDRA DICE SETS
GAMESCIENCE High Impact™ Precision Edged™ Polyhedra Dice are available in a 7-PIECE set featuring our **DECKAIDER™** along with D4, D6, D8, D10, D12 and True D20, packaged in a clear plastic tube. Available in our standard Opaque colors (INKED sets only) for **$7.25**, or in **GEM™** sets, **$5.50** uninked, **$9.00** inked.

BINARY DIE (GS 10701) **$1.50**
A 6-sided die with 1 spot drilled into 3 of its faces, while the other 3 are blank. Ideal for computer buffs to generate random information. Also useful for yes/no, left/right, and other either/or decisions.

"UGLY DICE" 12-PIECE STARTER SET (GS 1107) **$3.75**
Such a bargain! Such colors! You get 2D4, 3D6, 2D8, 2D10, 2D12 and 1 True D20 in assorted Ugly Colors, but our same High Impact™ Precision Edged™ dice--at less than 25¢ per die! (Cheap--and nasty!)

And don't forget **ROCKET RANGERS™**, **SUPERDUDES™**, **ROBOPUNKS™**, and other **TWERPS™** game titles. It's "The World's Easiest Role-Playing System"--and it's only **$3.00** per title!

GAMESCIENCE still manufactures many of the plastic and lead starships Task Force used to offer for its STAR FLEET BATTLES system, including the Federation Heavy Cruiser (GS 10504), Destroyer (10505), Scout (10506), Dreadnought (10507), and Tug (10508) in White plastic, Clear/"Cloaked", Blue Glow and Green Glow, $4.00 each; lead K-Type (GS 10602) and R- & T-Type (GS 10604) for $6.00 each.

Among the fine Hobby Shops where you can find these and more GAMESCIENCE quality products:

ALL STAR GAMES	CRAZY EGOR	GAMES PLUS	RUSTY SCABBARD
Diamond Bar, CA	Rochester, NY	Mt. Prospect, IL	Lexington, KY
(714) 598-4700	427-2190	577-9656	255-3514

In the UK, your exclusive GAMESCIENCE distributor is HOBBYGAMES LTD.
In Japan, it's POST HOBBY/HOBBY JAPAN.

If YOUR favorite Hobby Shop doesn't have those hard-to-find items you seek, write for ZOCCHI's 24-page catalogue of over 6500 games and gaming accessories, just **$4.00**. (To mail order items, include **$3.00** shipping. VISA, MC, DISCOVER and AMEX accepted.)

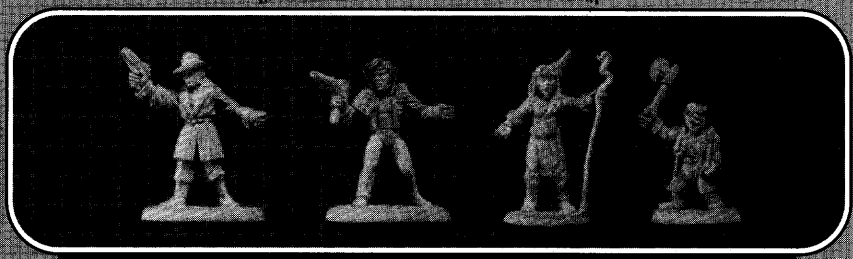
GAMESCIENCE, Dept. D180 / 1512 – 30th Ave., Gulfport, MS 39501 / (601) 863–0215

AD&D is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc.

SHADOWRUN™

>>>>>[PRIORITY ALERT]<<<<<

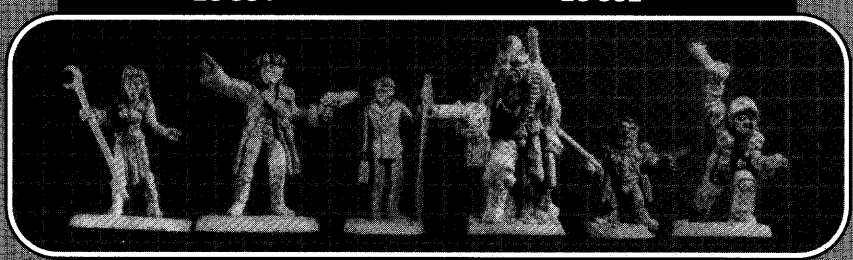
||VIDEO DISPLAY NOT AVAILABLE FOR PRINT-OUT!!|



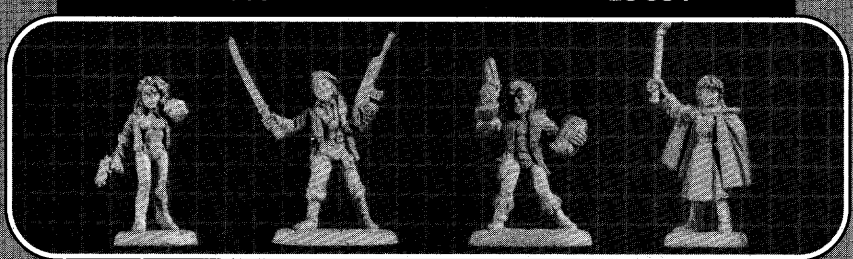
20-500



20-501 20-502



20-503 20-504



20-505

APPREHEND >>>AT ALL COSTS<<<

20-500	SHADOWRUNNERS (4)	5.50
20-501	DECKERS (3)	4.25
20-502	HUMAN STREET SAMURAI (3)	4.25
20-503	MAGES (3)	4.25
20-504	META-HUMAN STREET SAMURAI (3)	4.25
20-505	ELVES (4)	5.50
20-506	CORPORATE CONTACTS (3)	4.25
20-507	GO-GANGERS (2 BIKES, 4 CHARACTERS)	7.50
20-508	RIGGERS AND ROCKERS (4)	5.50
20-509	HUMAN STREET GANG (3)	4.25

AVAILABLE >>>FOR BACK-UP<<<

20-510	CORPORATE SECURITY GUARDS (1 ORC, 4 HUMAN)	6.50
20-511	LONE STAR STREET COPS (1 OFFICER, 4 TROOPERS)	6.50

>>>>>[I spied this same fraggin' group of razorguys jandering through the sprawl just the other day! Bad news, chummers!!..... NASTY! (Drummin' biz, no doubt.....)]<<<<<
– Gutterfly <21:46:05/10-22-50>

>>>>>[Dull the drek out, hoser! We were just on our way to the local time-passery to hang for a while!!]<<<<<
– Deckhead <21:48:36/05-22-50>

TO PLACE AN ORDER CALL TOLL FREE, MON. THRU FRI., 8:30 TO 5:00 E.S.T., 1 (800) 543-0272 OR SEND $3.00 FOR OUR COMPLETE PHOTO CATALOG TO:
RAL PARTHA ENTERPRISES, INC.
5938 CARTHAGE CT.
CINCINNATI, OH 45212
PHONE: (513) 631-7335 OR FAX: (513) 631-0028
VISA AND MASTERCARD ACCEPTED

RAL PARTHA MINIATURES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FROM...
UNITED KINGDOM: MINIFIGS– 1/5 GRAHAM ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON, ENGLAND, SO2 0AX
CANADA: RAFM– 20 PARK HILL ROAD EAST, CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO, CANADA N1R1P2
FRANCE: JEUX DESCARTES– 1, RUE DU COLONEL, PIERRE AVIA, PARIS CEDEX 15, 75503 FRANCE

SHADOWRUN IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF THE F.A.S.A. CORPORATION AND IS USED BY RAL PARTHA ENTERPRISES, INC. UNDER EXCLUSIVE LICENSE. ©1991 FASA CORP. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

RAL PARTHA

WHERE MINIATURES MEET MAN AND MAGIC.

Letters

Continued from page 5

. . . Constantine received this chain letter in 1953. He asked his secretary to make 20 copies and send them out. A few days later, he won a lottery of $2,000,000.00. Aria Daddit, an office employee, received the letter and forgot it had to leave his hands within 96 hours. He lost his job. Later, after finding the letter again, he mailed out 20 copies. A few days later, he got a better job. . . .

If a woman is *polymorphed* into an animal and mates with another member in the species she was *polymorphed* into, and gets pregnant, what will the baby be? Will it be human? The animal the woman *polymorphed* into? A crossbreed? A mutant?

Every time I initiate a new group of players into my TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES game, at least one of the new players asks me, "Where's the trees?" And I think, "I don't know." So now to alleviate the burden on GMs everywhere, I may now answer, "Here they are!"

Now most people think that I could just tell my players that there is nothing interesting about trees. However, if you take a close look, there is quite a lot. To save myself the work of writing down all of the powers a hundred different times, before I give you the trees themselves, I'll give you some powers trees possess. . . .

What is the current gold-piece selling value of a harem girl? If the PCs decide to keep them, do they get XPs?

I have word that you wish to sell this company. [Here are] nine million dollars. Mail keys and directions to above address. Everybody out for new management. *[Play money enclosed.]*

We the members of "Death, Destruction, and Don't Forget the Chaos" have something to discuss with you. It is a matter of character names. Our fifth party member, Ungee Greenwood, Bard of Renown, is quite distressed at a certain author, one Ed Greenwood, for using his name. . . . We are requesting that Ed change his name. It's a simple matter, really. Something along the lines of "Ed Grubwood" would work (and the Rot would be more understanding).

I would just like to thank you for all your great articles. They have been a great game aid. They really spice up my games. I especially like "The Ecology of the Giant Leech." It gave me new insights on the game,

[from a monster description] Jelly bellies are a viciously clever humanoid race that feeds on humans. They look like corpulent men and women and cannot be distinguished as anything but.

. . . Just follow the instructions. Send $1 wrapped in a blank sheet of paper to the first person on the list below. Then omit that name from your list. Add your name to the fourth position on the list. send the letter bearing your name to ten women you admire—ten prospects. Mail your letters within 48 hours and do not break the pattern, please. When your name reaches the first position, it will be your turn to collect the fees. 10,000 intelligent, wonderful women may participate and you will be $10,000 richer.

Any typos in the letter are not actually errors. They illustrate the new way to spell the words.

This past weekend I went to the first Arisia Con in Boston, Mass. The best and most important part of the convention was a panel called, "Earth Girls Aren't Easy." Five women (one was the moderator) led a discussion about what women like and dislike when men try to pick them up at conventions. . . . I hope that you would consider mentioning "Earth Girls Aren't Easy" in the next possible editorial so that others can hear about the idea and have a panel in their cons. I think that it is a very worthy cause.

[opening line from a short story] The ritual slaughter of the anteaters traditionally took place on the longest day of the year, this year being no exception.

One of my players read something in DRAGON Magazine about sex in D&D games, but it didn't say anything about it and I didn't know what to say so I wrote this letter. Is there such a thing as sex in D&D games and if so, how is it done? Ω

BEAR THE MARK PROUDLY!

The CHAOS LINE

From CHESSEX

Mugs! Badges! T-Shirts! Book Covers!

THE CHAOS LINE

Featuring the Arrows of Chaos

•8020 Chaos Dragonskin*	$5.00
•29869 Chaos D6, Red on Black	50¢
•51901 Arcahic AoC Metal Pin	$5.00
•87013-5 T-shirt. Red on Black M, L, XL,	$15.00
•88001 Red Archaic AoC on Glass 15oz. Mug	$10.00
•88002 Red Modern AoC on Glass 15oz. Mug	$10.00
•88101 Red Archaic AoC on Black Coffee Mug	$8.00
•88102 Red Modern AoC on Black Coffee Mug	$8.00
•88103 Gray Archaic AoC on Gray Coffee Mug	$8.00
•88104 Red Modern AoC on Gray Coffee Mug	$8.00
•88621 AoC Rubber Stamp	$6.00

Plus the New Hazard Line

•66737 Biohazard Rubber Stamp	$6.00
•66238 Radiation Hazard Stamp	$6.00
•67237 Green Biohazard on White Coffee Mug	$8.00
•67238 Black Radiation Hazard on Yellow Mug	$8.00

*Not Pictured

Ask for us by name at Your Local Retailer!



Dealer inquiries Welcome. In Australia contact Ventura Games, Sydney. Send SASE for names of local retailers to Chessex, 2990 San Pablo Ave. Berkeley CA 94702

CHESSEX Berkeley CA, Fort Wayne IN, Phoenixville PA, Longmont CO.

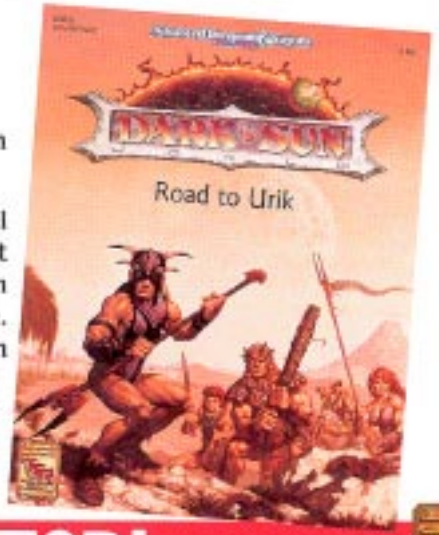


The Fight for Freedom Has Just Begun!

Tyr is free! Kalak is dead, echoes through the streets of the ancient city. Tyr celebrates its sovereignty. But the jubilation is short-lived. . . .

Under the cover of darkness, mammoth armies are marching upon the new-born town. King Tithian resists conquest, but others on the Council of Advisors are less eager to risk their wealth and lives for independence. It falls upon you to help mobilize and lead the troops on the road to Urik.

Designed for 4th to 7th level characters, **Road to Urik** is set in and around Tyr, campaign base for your DARK SUN™ game. A stand-alone adventure with specially-designed flip books for both players and DMs, **Road to Urik** can be played as the sequel to **Freedom**.



NEW FROM TSR!

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc. DARK SUN and the TSR logo are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

New!
The Dragon's Den Adventure Pack

Bailiff Wortley shows a map to you and explains, "Here's the lair of the wretched green dragon." He hands you two more maps and says, "And here's the lair of three black dragons — fortunately two are only hatchlings. The third map shows where we *think* a red dragon is hiding."

You ask, "What's in it for us?"

He says, "3,000 gold pieces for each dragon you kill. But whatever treasure you find is yours." Then he leans on the table toward you. "And dragons have *lots* of treasure . . ."

The Dragon's Den Adventure Pack is filled with three entry-level adventures for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, each tougher than the last. The pack contains three poster-size maps and adventure booklets, six dozen stand-up monsters and characters, and loads of cardboard tiles for your dungeon. As an added bonus, there's also a mini board-game to play when you don't have time for an entire adventure.

Find this new Dragon's Den Adventure Pack and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game on sale at game, hobby, and book stores everywhere.





DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a registered trademark owned by TSR, Inc. The TSR logo is a trademark owned by TSR, Inc. © 1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.



50350>
9 781560 764380
ISBN 1-56076-438-4





AD&D™ Trading Cards Magazine Set Three

You hold in your hands the result of an experiment that has gone very well for TSR, Inc. These trading cards have proven themselves highly useful to collectors and game players alike. The cards in this magazine are from the first print run of 1992 and are rare in themselves. Your comments have made them as good as they are, and we thank you for your efforts.

Every year from now on, you can expect a sheet of cards in this magazine. These cards are automatically valuable and will make your magazine more collectable. These cards will also be highly useful in your fantasy campaign. There is nothing like a free deal that's a great deal, and this deal is both.

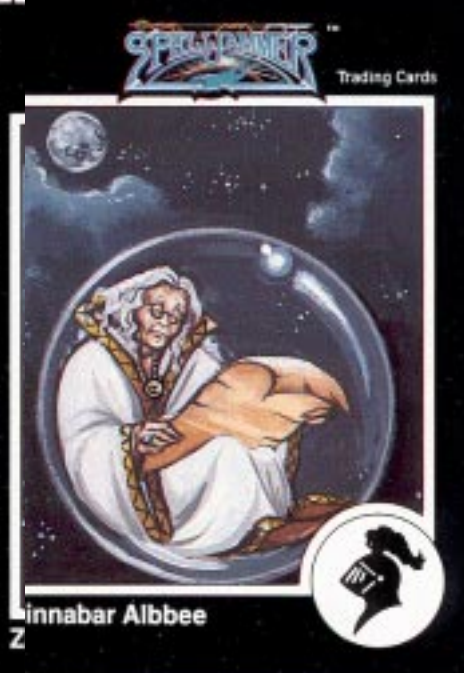












In May of this year, a limited supply of the first half of the series of cards will reach store shelves everywhere. In July, the second half will reach the stores; again, there will be only a limited supply of these. These will all be first-print-run cards, and no more of these special cards will ever be printed. The 1992 factory set of second-print-run cards will be out in November. Again, a limited number of these sets will go out to stores every where. Please write to me and tell me what you think of these cards or any of TSR's products.

Trading Cards/James M. Ward
TSR, Inc.
P.O. Box 756
Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.

AD&D and GEN CON are trademarks of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR Inc. All Rights Reserved.

DragonLance™ Trading Cards

Foleas

13th-level Warrior

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 2
THAC0: 5
MOVEMENT: 6
HIT POINTS: 81
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil
EQUIPMENT: Field plate armor, *two-handed sword of wounding, gauntlets ogre strength*
BACKGROUND: Foleas remembers the War of the Lance as the happiest days of his life. He enjoyed sacking towns, getting drunk with draconians, and even throttling one or two passed-out baaz, just to watch them turn to stone. Now he leads a band of thieves outside of Sanction, and he talks incessantly of the "good old days."

731

DRAGONLANCE is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Alvestar Jankins

6th-level Cat Burglar

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THAC0: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 26
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic good
EQUIPMENT: Thieves' tools, *slippers of spider climbing, flatbox*
BACKGROUND: Alvestar's dexterity (18) provides him with an AC bonus. He has never been able to resist opening things and looking inside. His father tried in vain to use more and more locks around the house, and Alvestar felt obliged to open them all. He doesn't really care about wealth; he simply loves getting away with what he steals.

730

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Aurora

9th-level Wizard

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: -1
THAC0: 18
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 47
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: *Bracers of defense AC 2, ring of air elemental command, wand of lightning, ring of invisibility, boots of Elvenkind, dagger +1*
BACKGROUND: Aurora's dexterity (17) gives her an AC bonus. She is a genius (Int 19) who loves research and views the world as one huge laboratory for learning. One of her goals in her adventuring career is to amass a huge library. Her familiar, a great horned owl, is her constant companion.

734

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Guido del Confuso

8th-level Priest

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 7
THAC0: 16
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 42
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: *Cloak of protection +3, robe of blending. mace of disruption*
BACKGROUND: Guido's preoccupation with wine, women, and gambling barely leaves him enough time to pray for his spells; sometimes they fail him. However, he is so good of heart that his god has not forsaken him. He is not interested in wealth or glory, but adventures purely "for the sport of it." Of course, a captured wine keg always helps!

733

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Mellenea

14th-level Psionicist

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 10
THAC0: l4
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 41
ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil
EQUIPMENT: *Robe of scintillating colors, silver sword, elemental compass*
BACKGROUND: Mellenea is adept in the psychoportive devotions and spends a great deal of time *probability traveling* on the Astral plane, looking for wanderers to rob or enslave. She has the *silver sword* of a defeated githyanki and often casts *graft weapon* upon it to sever the silver cords of those who refuse to serve her.

732

ADVANCED DUNGEONS&DRAGONS
is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

SPELLJAMMER™ Trading Cards

Zinnabar Albbee

17th-level Wizard

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: -3
THAC0: 15
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 38
ALIGNMENT: Lawful good
EQUIPMENT: *Ring of wizardry, ring of protection +6, necklace of adaptation, robe of the archmagi, well of many worlds*
BACKGROUND: Zinnabar reminds you of your grandmother, and she loves to grant childish *wishes.* She has been wandering through wildspace "on an extended retirement tour" so long that she doesn't quite recall her home world.

737

SPELLJAMMER is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

"Slipper" Kindric

4th-level Rogue

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 9
THAC0: 19
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 18
ALIGNMENT: Lawful evil
EQUIPMENT: Thieves' tools, *manual of stealthy pilfering*
BACKGROUND: Slipper, so named because she has been caught at the scene of the crime several times but never apprehended, enjoys a bonus to her AC because of her dexterity (16). Her main goal is to please her guildmaster because she wants to work her way through the ranks and become a guildmaster herself. Hence, she frequently volunteers for jobs that are beyond her capabilities.

736

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

GREYHAWK™ ADVENTURES Trading Cards

"Thalios" (Maltus Vindir)

7th-level Spy

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 5
THAC0: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 30
ALIGNMENT: Lawful neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Elven chain mail, c/oak of elvenkind, ring of mind shielding*
BACKGROUND: Maltus has been a mole in the Valley Militia, helping to guard the Valley of the Mage for six months. His mission is to wait until a band of humans enters the valley at midnight and calls out, "The Black One awaits the dawn," at which time he will kill his watch companion and secret the party past the guard.

735

GREYHAWK is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Chobin "the Punkster"

6th-level Wizard

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 4
THAC0: 19
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 14
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic neutral
EQUIPMENT: Ivory-spiked leather armor, *ring of protection +2, ring of shocking grasp, crystal hypnosis ball*
BACKGROUND: The Punkster stole a cursed *crystal hypnosis ball* from his former master, not knowing its true nature, so that he could use it to find his parents. Since then he's found monsters everywhere that he's looked. So far Chobin's managed to survive, but his constant bad luck has given him an "attitude problem."

723

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Darwell Tectite

11th-level "Box-man" Rogue

RACE: Dwarf
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THAC0: 15
MOVEMENT: 6
HIT POINTS: 43
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: Thieves' tools, *chime of opening, bag of holding*
BACKGROUND: Darwell is a lock-picking specialist whose talents are available only through her guildmaster. Due to her excellent dexterity (18) and extensive training, she has a 95% chance to pick almost any lock she encounters. Darwell believes in stealing only from the wealthy, and she refuses jobs that would leave anyone financially ruined.

722

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Aruthir

9th-level Druid

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: 0
THAC0: 15
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 71
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Bracers of defense AC 2, scimitar +3, medallion of adaptation, ring of protection +2, ring of feather falling, staff of Kitsyrral*
BACKGROUND: Aruthir divides his time between scouting (in hawk-form) with his pet, Lari, and acting as healer for his adventuring party. His *staff of Kitsyrral* allows him to store ten spell charges in it and cast any spell (in his spell spheres) upon demand. Aruthir is handsome and extraordinarily vain about it.

721

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Jastus

5th-level Barbarian Warrior

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THAC0: 14
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 40
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic good
EQUIPMENT: Stone knife, *boots of the north*
BACKGROUND: Jastus's superior strength (18/88) improves his THAC0 by 2. Metallurgy is unknown to Jastus's tribe, so he believes that his stone knife is the deadliest weapon ever constructed. and he uses it very well. Jastus has heard tales of warmer lands far to the north of his home, but he believes that they are inhabited by fire creatures and he wants no part of them.

726

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Forgotten Realms™ Trading Cards

Hm-boye

3rd-level Warrior

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 6
THAC0: 18
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 18
ALIGNMENT: Neutral good
EQUIPMENT: *Ring of jumping*
BACKGROUND: Hm-boye's mother reputedly came from Kara-Tur, but Procampur is the only home he's ever known. Hm-boye lives in a rough neighborhood near the wharfs, where he gets plenty of chances to combine his acrobatic martial arts prowess with standard weapon techniques. He's not a criminal, but the city guards usually try to arrest him on sight.

725

FORGOTTEN REALMS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Lady Wendolyn of Gaunt

10th-level Cavalier

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: -3
THAC0: 11
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 83
ALIGNMENT: Lawful good
EQUIPMENT: *Plate mail of fear, shield +2. horseman's flail +1*
BACKGROUND: Wendolyn began her training in horsemanship at a very early age and became a much better rider than her elder brothers before she was ten years old. She would like to be a paladin like her mother, but she has never heard the call of the gods and she doesn't believe that any of the existing orders are deserving of her faith and talents.

724

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Forgotten Realms™ Trading Cards

Reptilla Half-elven

12th-level Wizard

RACE: Half-elf
ARMOR CLASS: -1
THAC0: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 35
ALIGNMENT: Neutral evil
EQUIPMENT: *Bracers of defense AC 4, cloak of displacement, curdled death*
BACKGROUND: Reptilla's high dexterity (17) provides her with a bonus to her AC in addition to her magical protection. She and her familiar, Thsst, inhabit a cave on the sunny side of one of the Dragonspine Mountains, where they waylay lone animals and travelers for Reptilla's experiments in the making of poisons.

729

FORGOTTEN REALMS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Phun Ach-mana Phun

14th-level Barbarian Priest

RACE: Human
ARMOR CLASS: 9
THAC0: 12
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 63
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Portable canoe, fur of warmth. incense of meditation*
BACKGROUND: Phun is a medium who communes with the spirits of nature for his tribe. They tell him when to plant and harvest, when to begin and end the hunt, how to appease the gods in times of famine, and so forth. He is capable of assuming the form of a deer at will, and he frequently runs with a herd in order to learn news of the surrounding lands.

728

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards

Delynn Rosabell

4th-level Warrior

RACE: Elf
ARMOR CLASS: 5
THAC0: 17
MOVEMENT: 12
HIT POINTS: 72
ALIGNMENT: Lawful neutral
EQUIPMENT: *Elven chain mail shirt*
BACKGROUND: Delynn is a mercenary soldier. Orphaned when she was an infant, Delynn was raised by a clan of war-loving humans that slew her people. When she grew old enough to question her identity, she returned to the elves and found that she could not identify with them, either. All she had was the skill of making war with which she'd been raised, so she set out alone, seeking fortune in battle.

727

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1992 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards



Aruthir

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards



Darwell Tectite

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards



Chobin "the Punkster"

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards



Lady Wendolyn of Gaunt

Forgotten Realms Trading Cards



Hm-boye

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards



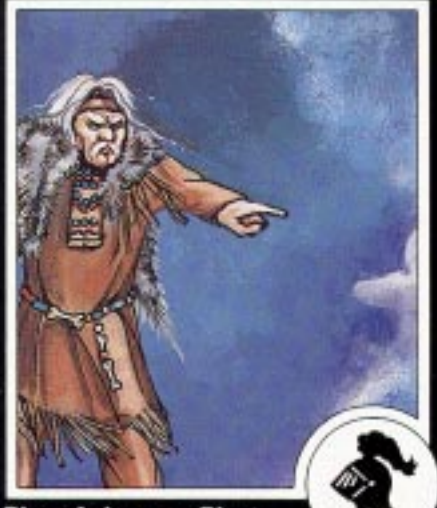
Jastus

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards



Delynn Rosabell

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ 2nd Edition Trading Cards



Phun Ach-mana Phun

Forgotten Realms Trading Cards



Reptilla Half-elven